PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY SUMMER SCHOOL

JULY 21-AUGUST 8, 1986

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CHRISTIAN TRUTH ACROSS CULTURAL BARRIERS
(Missions in a Pluralistic World at Home and Abroad)

S 330/S 730 — Samuel Moffett
Summer 1986 — Eileen Moffett

Course Description:
In this course's focus on Christianity and Culture on all six continents, attention will be given to sharpening Christian awareness of local and global socio-cultural distinctions; and to identifying what is the truth to be conveyed and how it can be communicated effectually across and between the culture of the first century (the Bible), the culture of the 20th century Christian communicator, and the various cultures of present-day receptors. Discussions will involve principles of communication, and contextualization.

Course Requirements:
Required reading: Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks (Eerdmans, 1986)
H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (if unavailable, one of the following:
David J. Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally (pp. 1-141 plus three other chapters of your own choice); or Charles H. Kraft, Christianity in Culture (pp. 1-115; 169-178; 261-290).
One-page reviews of each of two books chosen from the Recommended Reading list.
Two five-page papers on subjects chosen from the Suggested Topics list. These papers will be presented for discussion, usually in the second period of each day.
There will be no final examination.

Schedule: Class hours 9:00 a.m.-10:20; 11:00-12:15 p.m.

Outline (tentative)
Week 1 July 21 - Introductions; Christian faith and non-Christian culture: the interaction.
July 22 - Principles of communication; What is culture?
July 23 - Culture: the barrier of race.
July 24 - The barriers of language. Discussion.

July 25 - The barriers of religion. Discussion.

Week 2 July 28 - Culture: Nepal, a case study. Slides, discussion.
July 29 - Religious barriers: African independent churches and religion. Paper and Discussion
July 30 - Religious barriers: Korean traditional religions. Slides, discussion.
July 31 - A classical definition: Niebuhr's Christianity and Culture. Discussion, papers
August 1- Jesus and His disciples. Papers, discussion

Week 3 August 4- Asian-American Churches (Dr. Lee). Discussion, papers.
August 5- Barriers of sex: Women and mission. Discussion, papers.
August 6- Contextualizing Theology Discussion, papers.
August 7- Western cultural barriers to Christianity. Discussion, papers.
August 8- Review; summaries and discussion. Thoughts in closing.

Recommended Reading

Louis J. Luzbetak, The Church and Cultures (Techny, Il: Divine Word, 1970)
Eugene Nida, Customs and Cultures (N.Y.: Harper, 1954)
Message and Mission (N.Y.: Harper, 1960)
Paul G. Hiebert, Cultural Anthropology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)
Mark K. Taylor, Beyond Explanation: Religious Dimensions in Cultural Anthropology (Macon, Ga: Mercer, 1986)
Don Richardson, Peace Child (Glendale, CA: G/L Publ., 1974)
Bruce Nichols, Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture. (Downers Grove, Il:IVP, 1979)
Charles H. Kraft, Communicating the Gospel God's Way. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1979.)
John Stott and R.T. Coote, ed., Gospel and Culture. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1979)
Marguerite G. Kraft, Worldview and the Communication of the Gospel. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1978)
Carl F. Hallencreutz, New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths. (Geneva: WCC, 1970)
J.N.D. Anderson, Christianity and Comparative Religion. (Downers Grove, Il:IVP, 1974)
D.T. Niles, Buddhism and the Claims of Christianity. (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1967)
G.H. Anderson and T. F. Stransky, ed. Mission Trends No. 5. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981)
Mission Trends No. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976)
Phil Parshall, Bridges to Islam. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)
Donald McGavran, Ethnic Realities (Pasadena: Wm. Carey, 1979)
W.A. Visser 't Hoft, No Other Name (Naperville, Il: SCM, 1963)
Tetsunao Yamamori and C.R. Taber, Christopaganism or Indigenous Christianity? (Pasadena, Wm Carey, 1975)
Alfred C. Krass, Evangelizing Neopagan North America. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1982)
Five Lanterns at Sundown. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978)
James Engel and H.W. Norton, What's Gone Wrong With the Harvest? (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975)
James F. Engel, Contemporary Christian Communications (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1979)
John C.B. and Ellen C. Webster, The Church and Women in the Third World. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985)

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No. and Name of Course: S 330/730. CHRISTIAN TRUTH AND CULTURAL BARRIERS

Term and Date: July 21 - Aug 8

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Richard NIEBUHR,	CHRIST AND CULTURE					
J. LUZBETAK	THE CHURCH AND CULTURES					
. HESSELGRAVE	COMMUNICATING CHRIST CROSS-CULTURALLY					
Gene NIDA	RELIGION ACROSS CULTURES					
DERSON and STRANSKY	MISSION* TRENDS No. 3					
C.E. FLEMING	CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THEOLOGY					

* M = Missing from shelves
R = Recalled from borrower

Conversion, Culture and Cognitive Categories

How much must Papayya "know" about the Gospel to be converted?

by Paul G. Hiebert

Can an illiterate peasant become a Christian after hearing the Gospel only once? And, if so, what do we mean by conversion?

Imagine, for a moment, Papayya, an Indian peasant, returning to his village after a hard day's work in the fields. His wife is still preparing the evening meal, so, to pass the time, he wanders over to the village square. There he notices a stranger surrounded by a few curiosity seekers. Tired and hungry, he sits down to hear what the man is saying. For an hour he listens to a message of a new God, and something which he hears moves him deeply. Later he asks the stranger about the New Way, and then, almost as if by impulse, he bows his head and prays to this God who is said to have appeared to humans in the form of Jesus. He doesn't quite understand it all. As a Hindu he worships Vishnu who incarnated himself as a human or animal in order to rescue humankind at different times in history. He also knows many of the other 33 million gods village proverbs say exist. But the stranger said there is only one God, and this God has appeared among humans only once. Moreover, this Jesus is said to be the Son of God, but the Christian did not say anything about God's wife. It is all confusing to him.

The man turns to go home, and a new set of questions floods his mind. Can he still go to the temple in order to pray? Should he tell his family about his new faith? And how can he learn more about Jesus—he cannot read the few papers the stranger gave him, and there are no other Christians within a day's walk. Who knows when the stranger will come again?

The author is presently Associate Professor of Anthropology and South Asian Studies at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary. He served six years in South India with the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Conversion and cultural differences

Can Papayya become a Christian after hearing the Gospel only once? To this we can only say yes. To say that a person must be educated, have an extensive knowledge of the Bible, or live a near perfect life would mean that the Good News is only for an elite few in the world.

But what essential change has taken place when Papayya responds to the Gospel message? Certainly he has acquired some new information. He has heard of Christ and his redemptive work on the cross. He may also have heard a story or two about Christ's life on earth. But his knowledge is minimal. Papayya could not pass even the simplest tests of Bible knowledge or theology.

To complicate matters further, the knowledge Papayya has, he understands in radically different ways from Christians in the West or in other parts of the world. For example, the English speaker talks of God, but Papayya speaks of *devudu* because he is a Telugu speaker. But *devudu* does not have precisely the same meaning as God, just as the English word "God" does not correspond exactly to the Greek word *theos* found in the New Testament.

Ordinary English speakers divide living beings

into several different categories. One of these is supernatural beings, a category into which they put God, angels, Satan, and demons. Another is human beings and includes men, women, and children. A third is animals, and a fourth is plants. In addition to these there is the category of inanimate objects such as sand and rocks, as well as a few kinds of life that are not so easily classified and over which there is some disagreement, such as virus and germs (see Figure 1). In this system of classification, God is categorically different from human beings, and human beings from animals and plants.[1] The incarnation means that God crossed the categorical difference between himself and humans and became a human.

Telugu speakers do not differentiate between different kinds of life. All forms of life are thought to be manifestations of a single life: gods, demons, humans, animals, plants, and even what appear to be inanimate objects all have the same kind of life (see Figure 1). To be sure, the gods have more of this life than humans, and humans more than animals or plants. But there is no real difference between gods and humans or humans and animals. After death, good humans may be reborn as gods, and wicked gods as animals. Moreover, gods come down constantly to earth as incarnations to help humankind, just as a rich man might stoop to help his servant.

The problem we face, then, is that when we translate the Word of God into Telugu, not only is there a change in sounds from *God* to *devudu*, but also a change in basic meanings. There is a fundamental difference in the ways in which the two words are viewed, and in the ways these words are related to other words belonging to the same cognitive domain.

If *devudu* does not carry the biblical connotations of the word "God," then certainly we must find another word for translating it. There are many others that suggest themselves: *ishvarudu, bhagavanthudu, parameshvara*, and so on. But upon examination we find that all of these carry the same essential meaning as *devudu*. There is, in fact, no word in Telugu that carries the same connotations as either the English word "God" or the Greek word *theos* (nor do these two have exactly the same meaning). Nor is "God" the only word with which we have a problem in translation. Similar differences exist between all the other major words of any two languages.

Now we must ask not only what knowledge must Papayya have to become a Christian, but also whether this knowledge must be perceived in a particular

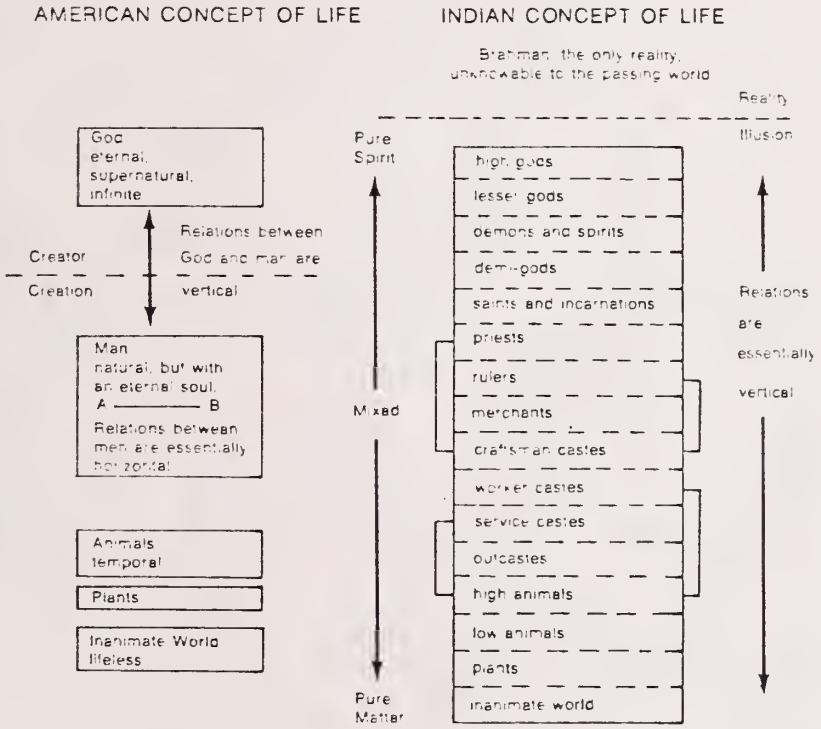

Figure 1. A comparison of American and Indian views of life.

way—from a particular worldview. Must Papayya learn the English or the Greek meaning for "god" before he becomes a Christian?

Since it is so hard to measure a person's beliefs and concepts, would it not be better to test his conversion by means of changes in his life? Can we not define a Christian as a person who goes to church on Sunday, and who does not drink liquor or smoke? Here, too, the change at conversion may not be dramatic. There is no church for Papayya to attend. The circuit preacher may call only a half dozen times a year. Papayya cannot read the Scriptures. His theology is found in the few Christian songs he has learned to sing. To be sure, he no longer worships at the Hindu temple, but otherwise his life is much the same. He carries on his caste occupation and lives as most other villagers do. Is he then not a Christian?

Conversion and category differences

What does it mean to be a Christian? Before we can answer this question we must look more closely at our own thought patterns—at what we mean by the word "Christian." This word, like many other words, refers to a set of people or things that we think are alike in some manner or other. It refers to a category that exists in our minds. To be sure, God, looking at the hearts of people, knows who are his. It is he who one day will divide between the saved and the lost. But here on earth, we as humans pass judgments, we decide for ourselves who is a Christian, and, therefore, what it means to be a Christian. What criteria do we commonly use?

Before we answer this question, we must ask an even more fundamental question: what kind of category are we going to use? Modern studies of human thought (see bibliography) show us that our mind forms categories in at least three different ways, and each of the three kinds of categories has its own structural characteristics. For our discussion here we will look at two of these types: (1) bounded sets and (2) centered sets.[2]

1. Bounded sets:

Many of our words refer to bounded sets: "apples," "oranges," "pencils," and "pens," for instance. In fact, the English language, probably borrowing from the Greek, uses bounded sets for most of its nouns—the basic building blocks of the language.

What is a bounded set? How does our mind form it? In creating a bounded set our mind puts together things that share some common characteristics. "Apples," for example, are objects that are "the firm fleshy somewhat round fruit of a Rosaceous tree. They are usually red, yellow or green and are eaten raw or cooked."[3]

Bounded sets have certain structural characteristics—that is, they force us to look at things in a certain way (see Figure 2). Let us use the category "apples" to illustrate some of these.

a. The category is created by listing the essential characteristics that an object must have to be within the set. For example, an apple is (1) a kind of "fruit" that is (2) firm, (3) fleshy, (4) somewhat round, and so on. Any fruit that meets these requirements (assuming we have an adequate definition) is an "apple."

b. The category is defined by a clear boundary. A fruit is either an apple or it is not. It cannot be 70% apple and 30% pear. Most of the effort in defining the category is spent on defining and maintaining the boundary. In other words, not only must we say what an "apple" is, we must also clearly differentiate it from "oranges," "pears," and other similar objects that are *not* "apples."

c. Objects within a bounded set are uniform in their essential characteristics. All apples are 100% apple. One is not more apple than another. Either a fruit is an apple or it is not. There may be different sizes, shapes, and varieties, but they are all the same in that they are all apples. There is no variation implicit within the structuring of the category.

d. Bounded sets are static sets. If a fruit is an apple, it remains an apple whether it is green, ripe, or rotten. The only change occurs when an apple ceases to be an apple (e.g., by being eaten), or when something like an orange is turned into an apple (something we cannot do). The big question, therefore, is whether an object is inside or outside the category. Once it is within, there can be no change in its categorical status.

2. "Christian" as a bounded set:

What happens to our concept of "Christian" if we define it in terms of a bounded set? If we use the above characteristics of a bounded set we come up with the following:

a. We would define "Christian" in terms of a set of essential or definitive characteristics. Because we

cannot see into the hearts of people, we generally choose characteristics that we can see or hear, namely tests of orthodoxy (right beliefs) or orthopraxy (right practice) or both.

For example, some define a Christian as a person who believes (gives verbal acknowledgement to) a specific set of doctrines such as the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, and so on. Some make such lists quite long and add on specific doctrines of eschatology or soteriology. Others, convinced that true "belief" is more than a mental argument with a set of statements, look for the evidence of belief in changed lives and behavior. A Christian, then, is one who does not smoke or drink alcohol, and so on.

b. We would make a clear distinction between a "Christian" and a "non-Christian." There is no place in between. Moreover, maintaining this boundary is critical to the maintenance of the category. Therefore it is essential that we determine who is a Christian and who is not, and to keep the two sharply differentiated. We want to make sure to include those who are truly Christian and to exclude as heretics those who claim to be but are not. To have an unclear boundary is to undermine the very concept of "Christian" itself.

c. We would view all "Christians" as essentially the same. There are old experienced Christians and young converts, but all are Christian.

d. We would stress evangelism as the major task—getting people into the category. Moreover, we would see conversion as a single dramatic event—crossing the boundary between being a "non-Christian" and being a "Christian." To do so a person must acquire the defining characteristics which we have outlined above. Crossing the boundary is a decision event. Once a person is a Christian he is 100% Christian. There is essentially (not required by the structure of the category) nothing more for him to acquire. He might grow spiritually, but this is not an essential part of what it means to be a Christian.

Let us return, for a moment, to Papayya. If we think of "Christian" as a bounded set, we must decide what are the definitive characteristics that set a Christian apart from a non-Christian. We may do so in terms of belief in certain essential doctrines. But here we face a dilemma. If we reduce these to so simple a set that we can say Papayya has truly become a Christian (that he has acquired *all* of the beliefs necessary to become a Christian) are we not in danger of settling for cheap grace? Furthermore, how do we handle the fact that Papayya views the doctrines we do require in different thought forms? Must these be corrected before we are convinced that he is a real Christian?

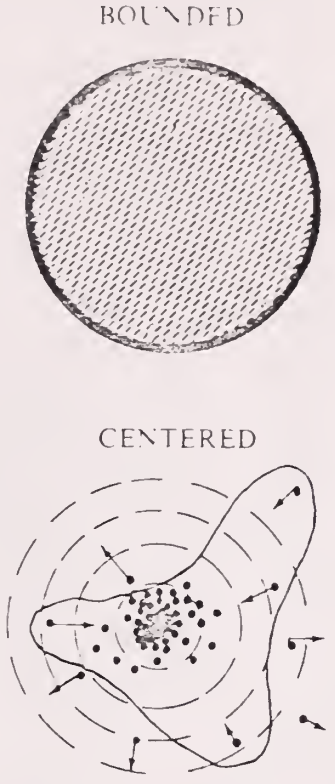

Figure 2. Bounded and Centered Sets.

On the other hand, if we raise the basic requirements for being a Christian too high, we make it impossible for Papayya to become a Christian that night, or that year—for it would take more than a year of careful teaching before he could begin to understand our theological framework.

We face a similar problem in using changes in behavior to define a Christian. There will be changes in Papayya, to be sure, but many of them will not take place immediately. We may see little in the way of a dramatic change by tomorrow. Is he then not a Christian?

3. Centered sets:

Could it be that our problem with deciding whether Papayya is or is not a Christian has to do with the way we form our mental category "Christian"?

But there are other ways to form categories. A second way is to form centered sets. A centered set has the following characteristics.

a. It is created by defining a center, and the relationship of things to that center (see Figure 2). Some things may be far from the center, but they are moving *towards* the center, therefore, they are part of the centered set. On the other hand, some objects may be near the center but are moving away from it, so they are not a part of the set. The set is made up of all objects moving towards the center.

b. While the centered set does not place the primary focus on the boundary, there is a clear division between things moving in and those moving out. An object either belongs to a set or it does not. The set focuses upon the *center* and the boundary emerges when the center and the movement of the objects has been defined. There is no great need to maintain the boundary in order to maintain the set. The boundary *is* so long as the center is clear.

c. Centered sets reflect variation within a category. While there is a clear distinction between things moving in and those moving out,[4] the objects within the set are not categorically uniform. Some may be near the center and others far from it, even though all are moving towards the center. Each object must be considered individually. It is not reduced to a single common uniformity within the category.

d. Centered sets are dynamic sets. Two types of movements are essential parts of their structure. First, it is possible to change direction—to turn from moving away to moving towards the center, from being outside to being inside the set. Second, because all objects are seen in constant motion, they are moving, fast or slowly, towards or away from the center. Something is always happening to an object. It is never static.

Illustrations of centered sets are harder to come by in English, for English sees the world largely in terms of bounded sets. One example is a magnetic field in which particles are in motion. Electrons are those particles which are drawn towards the positive magnetic pole, and protons are those attracted by the negative pole.

4. "Christian" as a centered set:

How would the concept "Christian" look if we were to define it as a centered set?

a. A Christian would be defined in terms of a center—in terms of who is God. The critical question is, to whom does the person offer his worship and allegiance? This would be judged, in part, by the direction a person faces and moves. A Christian has Christ as his God. Christ is his center if he moves towards Christ—if he seeks to know and follow after Christ.

From the nature of the centered set, it should be clear that it is possible that there are those near the center who know a great deal about Christ, theology, and the church, but who are moving away from the center. These are the Pharisees. On the other hand, there are those who are at a distance—who know little about Christ—but they may be Christians for they have made Christ their Lord. He is the center around which their life revolves.

b. There is a clear division between being a Christian and not being a Christian. The boundary is there. But there is less stress on maintaining the boundary in order to preserve the existence and purity of the category, the body of believers. There is less need to play boundary games and to institutionally exclude those who are not truly Christian. Rather, the focus is on the center and of pointing people to that center.

c. There is a recognition of variation among Christians. Some are closer to Christ in their knowledge and maturity, others have only a little knowledge and need to grow. But all are Christian, and all are called to move even closer to Christ.

By recognizing variance, the centered set avoids the dilemma of offering cheap grace to make it possible for the ignorant and the gross sinners to become Christians without lengthy periods of training and testing. Growth after conversion is an intrinsic part of what it means to be a Christian. A Christian is not a finished product the moment he is converted.

Two important dynamics are recognized. First there is conversion, which in a centered set means that the person has turned around. He has left another center or god and has made Christ his center. This is a definite event—a change in the God in whom he places his faith.[5]

But, by definition, growth is an equally essential part of being a Christian. Having turned around, one must continue to move towards the center. There is no static state. Conversion is not the end, it is the beginning. We need evangelism to bring people to Christ, but we must also think about the rest of their lives. We must think in terms of bringing them to Christian maturity in terms of their knowledge of Christ and

their growth in Christlikeness. We must also think of the body of believers in terms of their growth over the centuries.

Stress on growth also means that every decision a Christian makes, not only his decision to become a Christian, must take Christ into account. Every decision throughout life moves him towards Christ or slows him down.[6]

If we were to define "Christian" as a centered set, the critical question regarding Papayya is not what he knows (although he obviously needs some knowledge) but has he made Christ his God—does he seek to follow Christ and to know him more fully?

Conclusions

What do we mean when we say that Papayya, an illiterate peasant, has become a Christian? In answering this, it is clear that we must first clarify what we mean by the word—whether we are thinking in terms of bounded or centered sets. If we do not make this clear, we will only talk past each other, and our disagreements will often arise out of subconscious presuppositions rather than out of theological differences.

A centered set approach to defining "Christian" corresponds more closely to what we see happening in mission and church growth. It also seems to correspond more closely with the Hebraic view of reality. But a centered set approach does raise some problems, at least for westerners who think primarily in terms of bounded sets. These problems often relate to the question, how do you organize an institution such as the church as a centered set? Is it not essential to maintain the boundaries by setting high standards for membership? On the other hand, the bounded set fits best with our western view of the world and our democratic ways of organizing associations such as the church.

Ultimately the question of whether we should see the term "Christian" as a bounded or as a centered set must be decided on theological, not pragmatic principles. But this demands that we think through all of the basic theological terms and decide which of these should be viewed as bounded sets, and which as centered sets.

Notes

[1]This is true despite the widespread acceptance of the theory of biological evolution. This theory blurs the distinctions between humans, animals, and plants. But in everyday life the distinction is strong. We can kill and eat animals and plants, but to kill humans or to enslave them is considered a crime. Animals need not wear clothes, but humans must.

[2]In addition to these two, there is a third and possibly a fourth type of category, namely fuzzy sets of one or two types. To be precise these should be referred to as fuzzy subsets.

[3]A composite definition based on the Oxford and the Thorndyke dictionaries.

[4]Between *A* and *not A*. This is the law of the excluded middle. While it is part of bounded and centered sets, the law does not hold for fuzzy sets.

[5]The turning may take several steps, but there is a definite turning around which is distinct from growth. Note, too, that the stress is on a *change* in knowledge or action. Knowledge must be acquired, but that in itself is not enough. It is a decision, a change in faith, that is the critical factor.

[6]In centered set terms, one might say that each decision moves a person towards or away from Christ, but that a person remains a Christian so long as he is faced towards Christ. Whether he can or cannot turn back to face away, and therefore lose his position as a Christian, is a theological issue and is not determined by the structure of the category itself.

[7]It is interesting to note that the independent church movements in India, such as Bhakt Singh, organize themselves in terms of centered sets. They have only loosely defined, or no church membership, and give leadership to a few elders at the center.

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MISSION FOCUS

The Bicultural Bridge

PAUL G. HIEBERT

How does the gospel move from one culture to another? In our day of mass media and modern technology, we are tempted to think in terms of radio, television, and the printed page. Rather, communication of the gospel across the chasms of cultural differences rests upon the quality of interpersonal relationships between human beings—between missionaries and the people they serve. This relationship of people of one culture to people of another culture is what we call the bicultural bridge.

The biculture

Communication across the bicultural bridge takes place within the biculture: a new culture created by people from two different cultural backgrounds. (See Figure 1.) When missionaries leave their first culture to enter a new society, they take with them their cultural maps. They have ideas of what is food and how to cook it, who should raise the children and what values should be taught to them, how to worship properly, and a great many other things. No matter how hard they try, they cannot "go native." The earlier culture of their childhood can never be fully erased. On the other hand, for missionaries to totally import their culture is impossible, even if they try. They are influenced to a great extent by the culture they enter—their second culture.

To the extent local people interact with the missionaries, they too become part of the biculture. They have their own ideas of food, child rearing, values, and worship. Even though they may not leave their country, they are exposed to new ideas and beliefs.

In order to relate to each other, missionaries and nationals must create new patterns of living, working, playing, and worshiping—in other words, a new culture. Much of the effort of a bicultural community, in fact, is spent on defining what that culture is. What types of clothes should be worn? Should missionaries and nationals each wear their own type of dress? Should they both wear Western clothes or the clothes of the local culture? What type of food should they eat? What type of house should they build? Should missionaries have cars, and, if so, should national leaders also have them? Where should the children of the two groups go to school, and in what medium of instruction? How should missionaries and nationals relate to each other? These and a thousand other questions must be answered in order to build a stable biculture that enables foreigners and nationals to communicate and work together.

While the biculture may borrow from the different cultures of its participants, it is more than the sum or synthesis of those cultures. New cultural patterns often emerge out of the interaction. In the end, if communication is to take place between people of different cultures, a satisfactory biculture must be worked out in which both sides find a measure of mutual understanding and satisfaction. Without this, for the gospel to cross the bicultural bridge is difficult.

The bicultural bridge is only one stage in the multi-stage

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communication of the gospel from one culture to another. The missionary has been trained by parents, pastors, and teachers before going to a new society. There he or she generally works most closely with national Christian leaders who are part of the same biculture. They in turn communicate the gospel to other people throughout the land. The greatest share of village evangelism and church planting has been done by national workers.

Our concern here is with relationships between missionaries and national church members, for it is here that the gospel and church are translated into a new culture. Whether people trust the gospel and whether they see the church as foreign or indigenous to their culture depends to a great extent upon the nature and quality of relationships of this bicultural bridge.

Generationalism in the biculture

As in other cultures, generational differences emerge within the biculture. There are newcomers—the missionaries and nationals who have recently entered the biculture. And there are old-timers—those who have spent much of their lives in the biculture.

First-generation missionaries

First-term missionaries belong to the first generation of the biculture. For the most part they are idealistic. They have taken an assignment because they have a great vision of the work and tremendous zeal. The goals they set for themselves are high—at times unrealistic. They will evangelize all of India in five years, or, if not all of India, at least Andhra Pradesh. Or they will build a large hospital or Bible school. Moreover, they are ready to sacrifice everything in order to complete their mission. They have little time for family or relaxation.

First termers are often called plungers because of their willingness to identify more closely with the national culture than do many of the old-timers. If they are encouraged in this identification, they can be bonded to the local culture and people. However, if they are acculturated into the missionary culture, they will acquire the belief that it is impossible to fully identify with the national people.

The success or failure of first termers depends to a considerable extent upon their place within the structure of the biculture. Placed at the top of a new venture, such as opening a new field, starting a new hospital, or building a new Bible school, they can be a tremendous success. They begin with nothing. When they leave there is a church or an institution. No precedents hinder them, and they have the power to build a program according to their own plans. For example, when the first missionary doctor moves to an area, there is often only an empty field. When he or she leaves, there is usually a hospital, complete with operating rooms, admissions offices, and wards. On the other hand, first termers placed at the top of new ventures can be tremendous failures. They have no institutional constraints and often no peers to check their bad decisions. They set the direction for new programs which are often difficult to change later.

When first-generation missionaries are placed at the top of old, established programs, they have a potential for moderate success. They have the power to institute their own ideas, but they inherit a legacy from the past. When they try to change established procedures, they will be reminded that "that is not the way the founder did it, or the way we have always done it." Later leaders of the program can never measure up to the remembered image of the founder whose picture hangs on the wall in the central hall. What the founder established as an *ad hoc* procedure, by the second generation becomes law and by the third becomes a sacred rite. But if first termers can be only moderately successful in initiating their programs, they can be only moderate failures. They are guarded from making great mistakes by the institution which has begun to acquire a life of its own. An institution has a way of staying alive and of temper-

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ing the failures of its leaders. By now too many people have vested interests in the institution to let it die easily.

First-generation missionaries placed at the bottom of old programs have little possibility for success or failure. They have little power to initiate change; this, combined with their vision and zeal, generally leads to frustration. A special type of person is needed to serve in such a position and to do so with a measure of joy.

One of the primary characteristics of missionaries' first terms is culture shock. Often for the first time, the newcomers have to come to terms with another culture—to learn its ways and to respect, even love, its people and their customs. The types of attitudes and relationships worked out during the first term will generally characterize the missionaries' ministries for the rest of their lives.

Second-generation missionaries

Second-generation missionaries are those experienced in the work they are doing. Often they are on their second, third, or fourth term of service.

Second-generation missionaries share certain characteristics. First, they tend to be more realistic in their assessment of their work. They have come to grips with the fact that they cannot evangelize all of Japan—or even Osaka—in five years. They realize that it is worth their life to build up a Bible school and to train a number of good leaders or to plant four or five strong churches.

They are more realistic, too, about their own lifestyles. They become increasingly aware that they have only one life to live. If they are going to have time with their children, they will have to do it now, before the children are grown. If they are to have rest and relaxation, they must do so at the expense of some other activities. They are no less committed to the task. In fact, their commitment has become a long-term one. But they are no longer willing to pay any price to attend meetings, classes, and wards. They begin to realize that their children and they themselves are part of the greater work of God.

The second-generation missionaries together with their experienced national co-workers do the greatest share of the mission work. For the most part they have solved the logistics of keeping alive. They know the language and the local customs. Consequently, they are able to give themselves to the long, hard labor required to plant the church.

One of the important tasks of the experienced missionaries is to help first termers adjust to the field. Even when this task is turned over to the church, experienced missionaries have an important pastoral role in helping the new missionaries to deal with culture shock.

Third-generation missionaries

Third-generation missionaries are sometimes referred to as the old-timers. In the study by John and Ruth Useem and John Donoghue (1963) in which the concept of bicultural generationalism was first presented, the old-timers were those who served abroad during the colonial era. Many of them, with some notable exceptions, accepted notions of Western superiority and colonial rule. They assumed that the missionary should be in charge of the work and live like foreigners with their compounds and bungalows. We are not to judge them, for they, like us, were people of their times. Many of them sacrificed much more than do modern-day missionaries. Missionaries then served seven or more years before going on furlough. Most of them buried spouses and children where they served, and many could not take vacations in the summer hill stations because the journeys by cart or boat were too difficult and long.

But times have changed. No longer do we live in a world in which colonial rule and foreign superiority are accepted. Today we need missionaries who identify with the people and their aspirations. Consequently, we find a generation gap between those who look back with nostalgia to the colonial era when missions played a central role in the life of the church and those who see the task of missions to be one of partnership in service with an autonomous church.

Generationalism among national leaders

Generationalism is also evident among the national leaders in the biculture. The young often have a great vision and zeal for the work. In our day of increasing nationalism, this is often linked to strong convictions that the national church should take responsibility for its own affairs. Like their missionary counterparts, they are usually willing to pay almost any price for the sake of the work. In many cases they have to sacrifice the support of families and kinsfolk who may have planned more traditional careers for them. First-generation leaders given responsibility for important tasks can be great successes—and great failures. Placed in a position of little authority and not allowed to lead, some of the best of them leave to join other (often nativistic) churches or to start movements of their own. Too often we have lost our best young men and women because we have not entrusted them with responsibilities.

Second-generation national leaders are those who have committed themselves to long-term work in the church or mission. Paired with experienced missionaries, they carry out the major share of the work.

Third-generation national leaders are those who grew up during the colonial era. For many of them the rapid movement toward nationalism is frightening and unsettling. They look back with nostalgia to the day when the mission was in charge and there was a great deal of security.

Stress points in the biculture

The biculture is a culture in the making. It has little time depth and is created by people from different cultures who have little or no idea of what the new culture will be like. It is not surprising, then, that there are points where stress appears. Furthermore, stress likely will remain part of the biculture for some time because few areas of the world have changed so rapidly as have international relationships. The shift from colonialism to nationalism—and now to internationalism—and the change in world powers as one nation and then another rises and falls in world power and prestige influence the biculture greatly.

The creation of the biculture

One area of stress has to do with the creation of the biculture itself. What shape should it take? What should be borrowed from each of its parent cultures? Should missionaries and nationals relate as parents and children, as contractual partners, as undifferentiated equals, or as what? If national leaders in developing countries receive the same salaries as missionaries, will they not be alienated from their people and many be attracted into the ministry by the affluent lifestyle? On the other hand, should there be differences that speak of cultural distance and segregation?

Today considerable emphasis is on the missionaries' identification with the culture to which they go. To the extent possible, missionaries should live within the cultural frameworks of the people to whom they go, for in doing so they are able to bring the gospel most of the way across the bicultural bridge. The distance between cultures is often great, and someone must bring the gospel from one to another. The further the

missionaries bring the gospel to a new culture, the more effective will be its acceptance and the less distance the national leaders must carry it to make it indigenous in that culture.

Early attempts at identification often focus on visible cultural practices regarding food, houses, clothes, cars, and lifestyle. Identification on this level is important, although we must recognize the limits of human adaptability. Some people must retain more ties than others to their cultural past in order to maintain psychological balance and effective ministry.

But identification on the level of practices can hide feelings of distance at deeper levels. On the level of roles, missionaries may feel that they should not work under the direction of nationals. On the level of attitudes they may be convinced of the superiority of their culture or race. No identification on the surface nor attempts to cover them will follow.

Search for identity

One of the big questions facing members of the biculture has to do with their cultural identity. To a great extent our personal identity is tied to our identification with a society and culture. Bicultural people belong to two sociocultural worlds.

Missionaries are often unaware of the profound changes that take place within them. They think of themselves as Americans or Canadians living abroad for a time. When they return to their first cultures, they expect to assimilate back into the culture with a minimum of adjustment. Often, however, they experience severe culture shock. To the extent they adapt successfully to the biculture, they experience a greater reverse culture shock on their return home.

Missionaries are shocked to find their relationships with their relatives and friends strained and distant. They expect these folk to be excited to hear about their many experiences, but after an hour or two, conversation drifts off to local affairs—to local politics, church matters, or family issues. The people at home have no frame of reference within which to fit these tales from abroad. Their world is their town and state or province. Missionaries, on the other hand, have lost touch with local matters and have little to say in conversations.

The gap is often accentuated by the altered world-view of the missionaries. They return with a bicultural and worldwide perspective that no longer identifies the home culture and nation as right, one which treats all others as less civilized. When missionaries criticize their first cultures, they arouse the suspicions of their relatives and friends. Missionaries are often saddened to find they are no longer close to relatives and friends. They find their closest friends among other bicultural people—people who have lived abroad. It does not matter much which other countries bicultural people have been in; there is a sense of mutual understanding, a common bicultural world-view that draws these people together.

National leaders, too, face a cultural identity crisis. In their relationships with missionaries they adopt foreign ideas and practices. Some travel abroad and become part of a world community of leaders, but in so doing, they leave their traditional cultures. They may find it hard to live in their native houses, dress in their former dress, eat their traditional foods, or even speak their childhood language. Like the missionaries, they belong not to their first or second cultures, but to the biculture that has emerged. When the leaders return home, they are often treated with suspicion or indifference. In the end, they, too, feel most at home with other bicultural people.

Both nationals and missionaries are people of two cultures. While they may resolve the tension between these externally by creating the biculture to order their lives and relationships, internally they must still face the question of reconciling two often divergent sets of values and assumptions. This internal tension may be handled in a number of ways. Some people attempt to build ghettos in order to preserve their first cultures. Too often, then, external withdrawal from the local culture represents a far deeper rejection of it at the psychological level. The result is a biculture far removed from the people, often ineffective in communicating to them the message of the gospel.

A second and opposite response is to attempt to go native in the second culture. Missionaries, for example, may try not only to identify fully with the people of their adoption, but also to deny their first culture. Similarly, nationals may reject their childhood culture and adopt fully the foreign culture to which they are exposed. This response is seldom successful. We can suppress, but never kill, the culture into which we are enculturated as children. It remains buried, but it will rise someday to haunt us.

A third response is compartmentalization: to accept both cultures, but to keep them separated. One or another is used depending upon the occasion. An example of this is the modern African chief who is a member of the national parliament. In the village he dresses in traditional dress, keeps several wives, and speaks his native language. In the city he dresses in Western clothes, has a modern wife, and speaks French or English. In one such case described by Colin Turnbull, the chief had a two-story house. Upstairs was modern, and downstairs was traditional. But the two worlds never met. Missionaries, too, can become cultural schizophrenics. In the long run, however, the tension between the two cultures is not resolved, and the persons live fragmented lives.

A fourth response to the tension of living in two cultures is to seek integration of the two. Parts of both are combined in a new synthesis—a synthesis that is generally based on a multicultural perspective that accepts cultural variance. Rarely is synthesis fully achieved, but in seeking to bring the two cultures together, the individual strives for internal wholeness.

Most bicultural people, with the possible exception of those who deny one or the other of their cultures, maintain symbolic identification with both cultures. For example, Western missionaries in India tend to talk about Western politics, greet all Americans and Canadians as old friends, and go to Western restaurants when they are in the cities. During the war years they received food packages with cheese, Spam, and Fizzies. These were put away for special occasions, to be eaten with American friends in a sort of ritual meal of identification with America. Upon return to the West, these same missionaries tend to talk about Indian politics, greet all Indians as old friends, and eat in Indian restaurants whenever possible. Suddenly Spam and Fizzies carry no symbolic value at all. The same identification with two cultures is found in Indians who are part of a biculture. This ritual identification with each culture is important, for it reaffirms the different parts of the lives of bicultural people.

Alienation

A second problem facing bicultural people is that of alienation from their first cultures. In the case of missionaries, this is less of a problem so long as they live abroad where their primary task lies. On their return to their first culture they sense the growing distance between them and their people.

The problem is more severe for national leaders. While they participate in the biculture, they continue to be involved in their first culture. For them to separate the two cultures geographically is impossible. Daily they must shift gears as they move from one culture to the other. Moreover, their task is to bring the gospel to their native culture, so they must retain close ties with it. If they identify too closely with the biculture,

they become alienated from their people and are mistrusted as foreigners.

The emergence of a cultural gap between leaders and people is a serious problem in much of the developing world. (See Figure 2.) This is true in politics and business as well as in the church. National leaders are given advanced training in English or French, travel around the world, and form friendships with people from other countries. They are often more at home in a plane and hotel than they are in their hometowns. With the emergence of this international leadership, broad strategies for world evangelization can be planned. But these leaders often find it hard to minister directly to the people in their countries. They can no longer serve as village evangelists and health workers. The danger in missions is to concentrate on advanced training for national leaders and to forget that the communication of the gospel requires leaders who can identify with the people. The training of indigenous leaders is one of the greatest tasks facing the church around the world.

Alienation in the case of national leaders creates another problem, that of dependency upon outside support. Many of the top leadership positions in developing countries are dependent upon foreign funds. When such funds are cut off—an increasing possibility in our age of political turmoil—leaders in these positions are vulnerable. Missionaries generally can return to their home countries and find other jobs. The national leaders have lost their support, and because of their training and cultural tastes, they find it hard to take jobs within their traditional society. Moreover, they have become politically identified with the West, and if some anti-American government comes to power, they may be marked for punishment or death. Unlike the missionaries, they cannot leave. In planning mission strategies we must be particularly sensitive to the difficult position in which we may place our national colleagues, and appreciate more the tremendous sacrifices they often have to make.

Missionary children

Some of the most difficult decisions facing missionaries have to do with their children. First, to which culture do these children belong? Unlike earlier mission movements when migration to a new country was common, the modern mission movement has been characterized by missionaries seeing themselves and their children as citizens of the missionaries' home country. In times of crisis and at retirement they expect to return to it. They assume that their children will marry and settle there.

Here is a fundamental misconception. Children raised in the biculture do not belong to their parents' first culture. For the children, **the biculture is their first culture.** Their home is neither the American nor the Indian nor the Brazilian culture, but the culture of the American-living-abroad or the Indian-living-abroad. Consequently many of these children suffer culture shock and problems of adjustment when they go (not return) to their parents' first culture. In many ways to them it is a foreign country. It is also not surprising that many of them try later in life to find vocations abroad that will take them back home. Sadly, that world is gone. However, because of their cross-cultural experience, they are often able to adapt to other bicultural situations. Those who stay discover that the foreign community abroad looks quite different to adults who work in it than to children raised in it. Most missionary kids adapt in varying degrees to their parents' culture, but for them this will always be their second culture. The cultural imprint of their childhood can never be erased.

If migrating to their parents' home culture creates problems for missionary children, so does going native. Foreign children abroad have a special role in the society. They attend different schools, speak a different language, and have bicultural values—all of which set them apart from the local people. With few exceptions, they suffer serious culture shock if they adopt local citizenship, marry into the society, and compete for local jobs. They are still outsiders.

When the decision is made that the children should eventually identify with their parents' home culture, the problem of education arises. Local schools generally do not correspond either in language or in curriculum with that of the children's country. In the past missionaries often left their young children in their homeland with relatives for education.

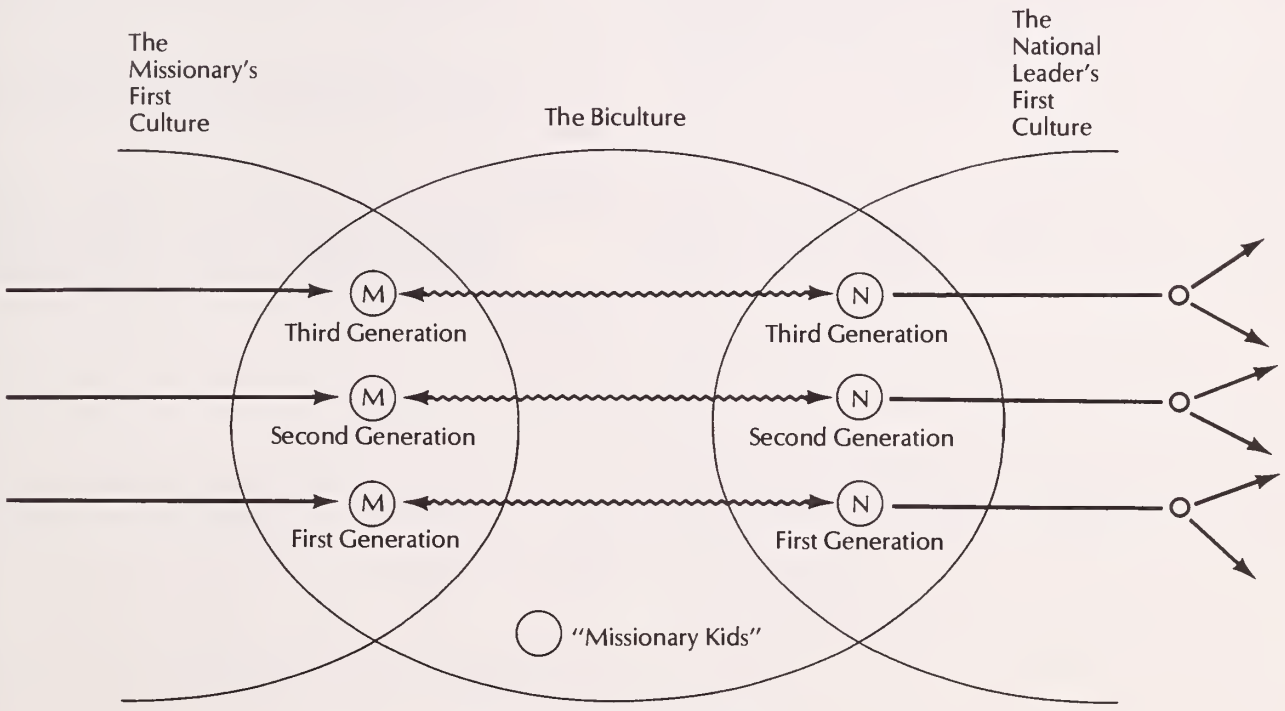

Figure 1. The Bicultural Bridge

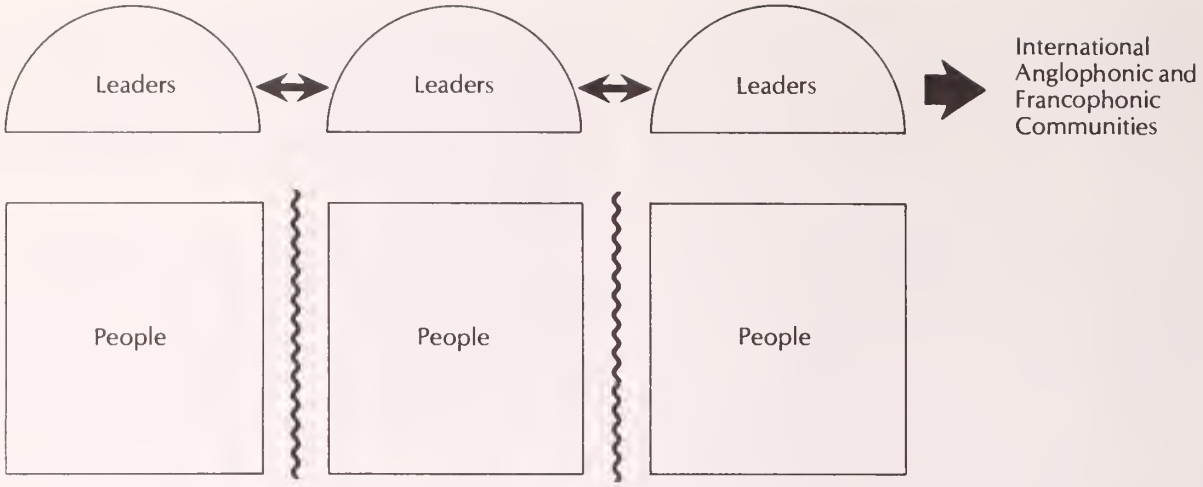

Figure 2. Alienation in Third World Countries

Later missionary children's schools became common. In some instances missionary mothers tutored their children at home. Each approach has had its difficulties.

Institutionalization

Bicultural relationships are essential if the gospel is to bridge the gulf between cultures. If they are to be enduring and fruitful, these relationships must take place within a bicultural context. But as is true of any culture, institutionalization sets in. What starts as a means to communicate the gospel across cultures becomes an end in itself. Over time, defining and maintaining the biculture occupies more and more time and resources, for both missionaries and national leaders have vested interests in maintaining it. Effective evangelists and teachers become administrators and builders. The flexibility that allowed early missionaries and national leaders to respond to local opportunities gives way to rules, policies, and hardening of the categories.

To be effective, mission requires a measure of flexibility and mobility. It is the church in action, reaching out to plant the church in worship. The balance between *ad hocness* and constitutional order—between individual initiative and corporate planning—is a difficult one to maintain.

Implications for missions

If the success of missions depends to a great extent upon the quality of the relationships between missionaries and the people to whom they go, is there a biblical model to which we can turn for guidance? In the past we have often seen the relationship as parent to child. More recently we speak of partnership. The biblical model is that of incarnation. To bridge the cultural gap between heaven and sinful earth, God became human and dwelt among us, eating our food, speaking our language, and suffering our sorrows, yet without giving up his divine nature. Incarnation is identification, but it does not deny who we originally are. It is, in fact, a bicultural or bipersonal state. Just as God became one with us in order to save us, we must become one with the people to whom we go in order to bring them that salvation.

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Witnessing to the Christian Way in Marriage and Family in Japan

CHARLES B. SHENK

This is a progress report on the study and efforts we have made in Hokkaido, Japan, to foster Christian families. We keep making these efforts not because of great measurable results, but because the need to encourage Christian families is great and the conviction to work at it doesn't go away.

The challenge of Christian marriage and family in Japan

Giving witness to Christian marriage and family life has long been high priority work for us in Japan. Why? The news media and those who come to us personally for help make the need obvious enough. For some it is a marriage problem, for others a frustration between parent and child. Then, too, the church has long asked for teaching and modeling of the Christian way in family life. But we also have the conviction that this witness may be one of the most significant points of contact that the church can make with the Japanese society which has so abundantly fulfilled most other needs.

The main areas of need as we see them are these: to lift women's position to be equal to men's, to promote mutuality and true companionship in marriage, and to encourage parents in child training and discipline.

The new Japanese constitution of November 1946 gives equality to women (Article 14) and mutual consent of the individuals, cooperation and equal rights, to marriage (Article 24). But legal means for change are not enough to effect change. While the ideal of a union between a man and a woman based on love and mutuality is in wide circulation, the actualizing of it takes time. The old hierarchal structure of *ie* (household) was abolished by the new constitution and there is some obvious movement toward real equality, but we still observe a strong residual influence of the "no equals" principle of *ie:* males superior to females; elders superior to juniors; those born in the household superior to those born elsewhere.

Doctor Narabayashi, a former gynecologist turned marriage counselor, in his recent book, *Gendai no Katei Ron* (A View of Modern Family), published survey results on the comparative happiness of Japanese husbands and wives. According to this report, after the first two years of marriage, the wife's happiness line is substantially lower than the husband's and the gap widens as the marriage lengthens (Narabayashi, 1979).

A few years ago when I was asked to speak on the subject of Japanese women at the annual Eastern Hokkaido Women's Convention, I was almost overwhelmed by their deep longing for more mutuality in marriage and confidence in relating to children. That talk resulted in six more invitations to speak on the same subject in other towns, PTA groups, and even to Kushiro city office workers! Discussions always followed, and the sentiments expressed then have been repeated since.

Women often express eagerness for a new dimension in marriage which they feel Christianity offers—mutuality, warmth, respect, and communication. (Even non-Christian brides want church weddings!) In a church seminar setting, a chorus of agreement followed when a Christian wife shared her desire for more expressions of love from her husband.

Two couples have been in deep distress largely because the young husband was not able to break psychologically from his family of origin, a common example of *ie* mentality influence. One young couple wished they could live for a while with a Christian family to learn firsthand what Christian marriage and family is all about.

Parents, mostly mothers, are constantly looking for guidance in how to train, discipline, and relate to their children. I suggested once in a lecture to mothers that we parents need a clear standard from which to teach and discipline our children. One mother responded, "But sir, we have no standard." The void left by the receding principles of *ie* has not been filled with something new, unless it would be the transference of responsibility to the educational system.

Christian and other young people now take the initiative, coming to the church or missionary for guidance. What is Christian marriage? How do we prepare for it? How do we find suitable companions? There is excitement and imperative in their inquiries.

Another imperative faces the Hokkaido church, coming almost with a sudden awareness recently. How do our own children come to faith? In many cases, while Christian parents were religiously pursuing their church activities, the children were somewhere else. Now there is serious interest in the influence of Christian parents on children and how the church can include and instruct them in its program.

In response to such needs around us through the years, we have taken opportunities to preach, lecture, and counsel, and use home meetings, camps, and seminars to spread the word about Christian family. We realize that modeling is going on all the time, whether we are aware of it or not.

In trying to upgrade our qualifications for this kind of work, we attended the two-week Christian Family Life Seminar at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, conducted by Ross Bender and Abraham Schmitt while we were on furlough in 1971. This has been the most significant single training experience we have had, but seminary courses on family and counseling have also been important.

The marriage and family seminar in Hokkaido

Thirteen years ago Japan Mennonite Conference asked Ruth and me to do one-day seminars on the Christian home for the Hokkaido churches. More recently these have been incorporated into the Eastern Hokkaido Bible School extension program. The seminars have been sponsored by one or two congregations or by youth groups. Earlier seminars were rather doctrinal in nature, laying out the duties of each member of the family. Now we are more comfortable dealing with the family in terms of relationships.

In abbreviated form, here are the basic materials we are presently using. When given for credit, seminars have ten class hours divided among input and discussion, role playing, and book reporting.

To get acquainted, each person introduces him- or herself

Charles B. and Ruth Shenk have served in Hokkaido, Japan, with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana, since 1957.

and family. For a meaningful group experience where trust and freedom develop, we have these ground rules: attendance at every session, free sharing of self and support of one another, and keeping strict confidence where deeply personal things are shared.

People not meant to be alone

Persons are created as social beings, to relate and have fellowship. God established community, beginning with family. What is family? One definition is persons in community. But what does it mean to be a person? For one thing, it means to be alive, to grow, to have identity and potential. It means to be able to say yes and no as a moral being, able to choose and give direction to life. It means to be able to say **I** and **me,** being aware of oneself as a feeling, thinking, acting being. It means the ability to say **you,** to be aware of others in relation to or in contrast to self. Finally, it means to say **you and I** to enter into relationships, deep and growing and reaching toward total mutuality (Bender, 1971).

In the Bible this personhood is the highest form of existence and manifests the likeness of God which he has given to humans. He is alive and gives us life. He is moral, saying **yes** and **no.** As the great **I Am** he acts purposefully. He longs for relationship; in **relationship** he is just and righteous.

The supreme revelation of this truth about God came to us in the form of a person, Jesus Christ, and the means through which we come into relationship with God is that community known as the body of Christ. While God's love to us stands first, we come to know him as a person through a community of persons.

Recognizing these things about the nature of personality and the personal way that God revealed this knowledge to us, we begin to realize in a deeper way why humans should not be alone. We see the beauty of God's plan for community, beginning with family.

Leaving, cleaving, and becoming one flesh

In the Creation account we find an instructive formula for the marriage relationship: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." The three action words are **leaving, cleaving,** and **becoming.** Leaving indicates a forthright break, physically and psychologically, from one's family of origin for the purpose of establishing a new entity. If the leaving is accomplished, only then can there be true cleaving. Two persons become closer to each other than to anyone else in a relationship that is more important than profession, relatives, children, guests, or friends. Equality is recognized, and the welfare and happiness of the partner is a primary concern for each. This begins the process of becoming one flesh in body, soul, and spirit. Partners seek oneness in regard to possessions, thinking and feeling, joy and suffering, hopes and fears, success and failure, faith and prayer. The sexual union symbolizes and reminds the partners of this deeper and wider union. These three actions may be seen as the poles of a tent, essential for a sturdy, happy, permanent marriage. All three are necessary (Friesen, 1978).

Christian love and mutuality in marriage

A. W. Verrall once said that one of the chief diseases of which ancient civilization died was a low view of women (Barclay, 1954). In Ephesians 5 the Apostle Paul paints a beautiful picture of God's intention for marriage and lifts up the dignity and worth of women. But, as William Barclay outlines it, things were quite different in the world into which Paul's message came.

The Jews had a low view of women. The Jewish man prayed every morning his thanks to God that he had not been made "a Gentile, a slave, or a woman" (Talmud). In Jewish law, a woman was more of a thing than a person. She was a man's possession and absolutely at his mercy. According to Deuteronomy 24:1, it was simple for a man to "send her out of his house."

The position of women was even worse in the non-Jewish world. Prostitution was an integral part of Greek life. Demosthenes said, "We have courtesans for the sake of pleasure; we have concubines for the sake of daily cohabition; we have wives for the purpose of having children legitimately, and of having a faithful guardian for all our household affairs." There was no possibility for companionship and fellowship in marriage for Greek and Roman women.

So Paul's message was not simply a restatement of what everyone already believed, but a new call to fidelity and purity and fellowship in married life.

Throughout much of the church's history, men—Bible readers and church leaders—have emphasized Ephesians 5:22-24, the "wives, be submissive" portion, often overlooking verse 21, where subjection is to be mutual, and verses 25-33, which makes the wife the worthful object of the highest kind of love and regard. Paul likens this love to that of Christ's for the church. What kind of love is this?

Sacrificial. Christ gave himself for the church. He loved the church not so the church would do things for him, but so that he might do things for the church.

Purifying. As Christ cleansed the church, symbolized by baptism, our love ought to lift and make a better person of the spouse.

Caring. Christ cares for the church. Something is wrong when a man regards his wife, consciously or unconsciously, as a kind of permanent maid who cooks, cleans, and takes care of the children.

Inseparable. Christ is united to the church as the members of the body are united to each other.

This passage is clear: **Love** is central and not control.

Preparation for marriage

Seeing the depth of meaning and the permanence of marriage in God's plan, how does one prepare? Examining one's reasons or motivations for marriage is a good place to start. Marrying for financial reasons, or because one will soon be too old, or to fill the void left after being jilted by a recent lover are hardly reasons that promise a fulfilling marriage.

Also, one might ask some basic questions about personal maturity. Where am I in the process of unselfing in the spirit of John 12:24-26? No real personal fulfillment is possible without commitment. One can hardly say he or she is ready for marriage until the security and well-being of the companion is just as important as one's own. Do I have the capacity and willingness for responsibility in my marriage role? How will I do in acceptance, "in sickness and health, for richer or poorer?" How forgiving can I be?

Perhaps few people would marry if they waited until each of these questions could be answered confidently with a positive reply. But neither should they marry until they realize that happiness in marriage will be closely related to the presence or absence of these personal qualities.

The mate-selection process

Abraham Schmitt believes that the process of finding the right person to marry resembles an iceberg. Just as the larger portion is submerged below the surface, something deeper is going on unconsciously in our choosing a mate. We cannot rationalize about our deepest, inmost needs, but rather are **given**

the spouse that we need by the great Matchmaker himself (Schmitt, 1976).

While we may consciously be looking for someone **like** ourselves, or in accordance with our idea—similar hobbies and tastes, compatible social and economic background, good looks—the larger unconscious process is drawing together two persons quite different in the deeper personality dimensions. For example, the person who likes to talk needs someone who can listen! The extrovert goes precisely for the introvert who is able to complement his or her being. This view fits well with recent studies of personality showing that people **do** want wholeness.

Model for a maturing marriage

"The two shall become one flesh" does not happen on the wedding day but comes through a living process of mutual commitment. Elton Trueblood says that marriage is not a contract assuming obligations and rights, but a commitment—giving everything we have and are. The question is not what will I get out of this relationship, but what do I bring to it and to my lover?

The maturation process must begin, say Abraham and Dorothy Schmitt, by committing ourselves to the belief that "we are meant for each other." This is believing that my mate is not only what "God hath joined" to me, but also the one whom I deeply need psychologically. Therefore, if trouble begins, the problem is not with the selection, but in the failure to let the complementation process proceed after marriage (Schmitt, 1976).

Such a problem reflects not a troubled marriage, but a normal one going through the dialectic pattern of union and separation experiences absolutely necessary for the development of the two individuals **and** the relationship. "Movement **into** relationship is an act of union when one discovers his likeness to the other and his likeness to humanity and hence his self-worth. Movement **out** of relationship is experienced as separation when one affirms his difference from another person or mankind and thereby discovers his identity" (Schmitt, 1976:111). There is no shortcut from the peak experience of courtship and marriage to the next major peak in marriage other than through the valley. The high cost of true intimacy involves the reckoning with and affirmation of each other as unique personalities. The intimacy we seek is not the blending of two personalities into one common unit.

The problem is that most couples begin married life with each partner trying to remake the other, which is ironic because this "different" person who now seems so often "wrong," is precisely the person that is needed! The valley experience will continue as long as one partner assumes he or she is better or can dictate behavior to the other. But as soon as the couple can begin to accept each other as is—unique and different—then the journey begins to move upward.

With tension past and equality recognized, change suddenly becomes possible. With new humility one can ask, what am I doing to my partner? What is wrong with **me**? What must **I** do to rescue this marriage? I married this person **because** of our differences; in accepting our differences we will grow.

A couple enters the final phase of marriage maturation as soon as they are able to trust both the unions **and** the separations—the intense intimacies and the inevitable conflicts of marriage.

The function of sex

The Bible talks of humans in their totality as being good. A human being is a whole person comprised of body and spirit, created from the beginning as male and female, which means that sex is built into our nature and structure.

Every man and woman is an embodied spirit, and each is made for communication and fellowship. But the spirit cannot talk to the spirit. The body must come to the aid of the spirit as the spirit moves the body. This fact underlies the meaning of sex.

Love is a thought, a feeling, an aspiration, a determination that seeks expression, but it is dependent upon the body. Therefore, we have the handclasp of a friend, the communion between mother and child at feeding and bathing time, the kiss of lovers, and ultimately, in marriage, the highest and most complete communication between man and woman, sexual intercourse. Regardless of age, the physical is the outward expression of the inner spirit.

In his chapter, "The Role of Sex in Love," Reuel Howe teaches that sex has two purposes, **procreation** and **re-creation** (Howe, 1959). He sees the re-creative purpose as of primary importance. Explaining this he says that the re-creative purpose has two functions. First, it is an outward and visible expression of any reunion achieved between marriage partners, such as after working or playing or worshiping together. The act of physical love becomes a seal of experiencing union. Second, sex may be the physical means by which the partners seek to break through separateness, to find the other as a person, and to experience the complementary fulfillment of what one, as an individual, lacks. In these two functions we have an important resource for renewal and reunion.

Howe believes that the re-creative function is primary because of its importance in establishing the community upon which the children of the union must depend.

A nagging question still remains: Why can't we more perfectly love those we love? The answer is that we need more love than we can give. In spite of our best efforts, a degree of need is always remaining. As Christians we believe in the enabling power of God. "When we make a positive effort to love and to forgive, we ally ourselves with the power of God's love which is always at work to unite and reunite us with one another and with Him" (Howe, 1959:102).

Meeting the basic needs of children

The Bible makes clear through passages in Deuteronomy, Proverbs, and in places like Ephesians 6 that God gives to parents a specific responsibility for the training and discipline of children. Happy, useful, responsible people don't just happen. Yet the society around us has largely handed the duty of teaching, even moral training and discipline, over to institutions.

As a primer on guidance for parents, we like to introduce the book, *Seven Things Children Need* by John M. Drescher (1976). The author seems to assume two things: one, that the primary requisite for meeting our responsibility to children is a warm, mutual parental relationship; and two, that meeting these basic psychological needs stands prior to the teaching of precepts. The seven needs Drescher points out are these:

Significance. A child needs a healthy sense of personal worth which comes from being noticed, appreciated, and loved as he or she is.

Security. Children need assurance that the ground is not going to fall away from under their feet. They need parents who are secure in their relationship, family-together time, and the communication of love and assurance that comes through touching.

Acceptance. A child who does not feel accepted by his or her parents becomes vulnerable to destructive group pressure, fights for acceptance from others, and is likely to feel that God hates him or her. Parents need to recognize the uniqueness of their children, listen to them, accept their friends, and by all

means, communicate acceptance in both success and failure.

Love. Psychiatrist William Glasser says that what we call mental illness occurs from the absence of two basic needs: to love and to be loved. A study in a large Oklahoma high school revealed that the ten most troubled students could not remember an expression of love from their parents, while the ten best students had *all* received that assurance within the past twenty-four hours!

Praise. The American Institute of Family Relations discovered that mothers criticize children ten times as much as they praise them! Persons seldom change because their faults are pointed out, but they may well become more beautiful people through sincere praise and encouragement.

Discipline. "A child with unlimited freedom gets frightened; he suspects he isn't loved" (Gross).

God. Happy is the child who is led early to the assurance that people are made by God and for God and find their ultimate security and purpose and rest in him.

Responses to seminars

Wherever we go, interest in efforts made on behalf of marriage and the family is high and we see some gratifying responses.

A middle-aged couple with grown children is attending every session of the seminar with their tape recorder. The tapes go to their college daughter in Tokyo, and dialogue follows by phone or letter. This couple said, "If only we could have had this experience twenty years ago!" They are also drawing close to the church.

After we spoke on child training in a parents' education series at a town hall, people bought twenty Christian books on the subject and one woman started coming to church.

A Christian couple's marriage was in trouble partly because the husband was bound to his mother and older sister. When the break was finally made and his own family and faith became central, everything changed—his family life, his service to the church, and even his relationship with his mother and sister!

A wife was discouraged about the discipline of her three small children. Now after receiving new insights on discipline, she testifies happily of a new kind of relationship with her children. The atmosphere is better, and she feels respected as a mother.

A young single brother in the church soundly resisted the idea of leaving his parents' home. Now as he approaches marriage to a fine Christian woman, his interest in a good marriage has become more than an academic matter. They are coming to us now for some pre-marriage counsel.

A couple in their late fifties, married thirty-four years, had been matched by arrangement and not their own choice. The wife attended a seminar series from the start and finally got her husband there by the end of the third (out of six) session. Now they are much involved, both listening and sharing their marriage with the group. Though many good matches result from the wise, objective judgment of a third party, this couple had severe doubts along the way as to whether they were properly matched and now feel they missed something beautiful by not having the privilege of courtship and personal choice. As a group, we agreed that the complementary process after marriage is of crucial importance, regardless of how the match was originally made. This couple, now enjoying a kind of renewal in their relationship, wish they could have heard this view of marriage a long time ago. They are also developing a relationship with the church.

These are the kinds of happenings which currently inspire our continuing efforts. Aside from this general congregational seminar, we are eager to work more with individual couples in the future.

Finally, it is a great satisfaction to us to see that Japanese pastor couples are becoming the models and counselors and teachers for their own people. Unless this happens, our work can hardly be considered ultimately successful.

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Reflecting on Thirty Years in Japan

AN OUTLINE BY RALPH BUCKWALTER

Editor's note: *After Ralph and Genevieve Buckwalter returned to the USA in May 1979 for Ralph to receive treatment for melanoma, I wrote to him suggesting that he "engage in some reflection and writing in an effort to sum up some of your chief learnings out of these past thirty years of missionary work in Japan." He replied that he was interested in the assignment.*

During the following six months of illness, despite gradually declining strength, Ralph kept in touch with many friends through correspondence. He also began making notes for an article on his years of missionary service.

Our thanks go to John M. Bender, seminary student and free-lance writer, for preparing this collection of Ralph's notes and excerpts for publication in **Mission Focus.**

This "reflecting" piece is not the article Ralph Buckwalter intended to have published. The substance of this article formed Ralph's outline, written in longhand on four pages of typing paper, for an essay reflecting the successes and failures of thirty years of missionary service in Japan.

Ralph's wife, Genny, found the notes some weeks after his death, January 10, 1981, when sorting through personal papers.

"I'm really sorry that we didn't get them [Ralph's notes] into manuscript form, but perhaps you can put them together to make some use of them," Genny wrote to Mennonite Board of Missions overseas missions administrator Wilbert R. Shenk in Elkhart, Indiana.

The notes reflect part of the sum of Ralph's life, that which has now been achieved in the service of Christ. Despite the course which the illness and treatment took, Ralph knew himself sustained in God's care. His last words in the outline were, "All praise to Him who is our Lord and coming King, in whose name we are called, sent and upheld."

One mark of a good servant is that not everything that is intended may get done. However, neither privation, nor hardship, nor illness can stop the Master's work from being done.

Today, Genny is back in Furano on Hokkaido, serving as a co-worker with the Christian community there. "When they want help I am glad to serve. At present I am taking my turn leading the weekly women's Bible study, and I will be responsible for one Sunday morning service per month," she said in a mid-1981 prayer letter.

Ralph's last article outline, with minor editorial changes for clarity and integration, follows. Excerpts from a previous work are inserted in italics for underlining of Ralph's ideas. The excerpted material is taken from Ralph's chapter, "Rejoicing in Expectant Hope," in *Being God's Missionary Community: Reflections on Mennonite Missions 1945-75.* (Elkhart, Indiana: Mennonite Board of Missions, 1975.)

Begin article

Our conviction at the start of our years in Japan is summed up in the words of a hymn which I typed on a piece of paper and taped to my file cabinet. It was there by my desk for most of these years. The second verse of "O God, Thou Faithful God," now #352 in *The Mennonite Hymnal* (Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania):

"And grant me, Lord, to do,
With ready heart and willing,
Whate'er Thou shalt command,
My calling here fulfilling;
And do it when I ought,
With zeal and joyfulness;
And bless the work I've wrought,
For Thou must give success."

Along with this conviction, Jesus' words to his disciples recorded in Luke formed my spirit and often came to mind at times when reflecting on God's ways of wonder-working sometimes through us, sometimes in spite of us, "And when you have done all these things that I have commanded you [could we ever say we had?] count yourselves unworthy servants" (17:10).

December 17, 1956: *God is with us! Immanuel! Hallelujah! We confess our utter unworthiness of the joys and blessings and burdens God has given us during these few years. We knew God would bless the church during our year of furlough. He did! New believers were added. The members grew through much testing of faith. One brother voiced the common testimony when he said, "God has permitted us to pass through deep waters in order that we might learn to depend only on His unfailing grace."*

What have we learned?

We have learned

- to keep on saying, "It seemed good to us and the Holy Spirit."
- to be more vulnerable, with courage to be weak, seeing ourselves as Christ's treasure in earthen vessels and not on a pedestal.
- to concentrate on essential relationships.
- to let program develop from our life together.
- to see growth as God's gift, as dependent on our abiding in the vine.
- to depend more on insights, promptings of the Spirit, less on personal plans, scheduled programs, projects.
- to recognize that fellow Christian missionary co-workers may have needs and feelings which do not fit into my sense of priorities—to let not this hinder fellowship.
- to accept and affirm what is good, to give time for growth for self and others and for the Holy Spirit to bring new understanding. There were many times that I grieved the Holy Spirit, I know, through **neglect,** through omission as well as commission. Sometimes someone in need or a special need in the church would cause me to cry to God for forgiveness and to seek anew to walk in the Spirit and just make no provision for the flesh. Sometimes a fresh reading of the Word, or reading of a stimulating author or the alive witness of a humble Christian or fellow laborer would point to the central need in my own life—to keep in tune with Jesus.
- to speak truth in love, praying, waiting, expecting to be filled with Jesus' love and then to speak, to confront. Necessity of honesty, openness.
- to not pass on gossip. Recognize how gossip and slander can easily pose underneath guise of "concern" and "caring"—

these think only what is true, good report, kind, right.

- to observe that interchurch (denominational) fellowship is fostered as each church group experiences growth. When home base is weak and suffering it is more difficult. Often Christian fellowship suffers the same in congregational life. When one is being tempted and suffering, the tendency is to stay away from fellowship just when it is most needed. Awareness that this pattern can be changed as we walk together in the light, confessing sins, bearing one another's burdens, sharing openly, and not hiding behind masks.
- to keep a gentle tension between obedience to Jesus' call and command to take up cross and follow and respond to Jesus' invitation to come with him and rest. Problem of fatigue and overwork and loss of discipline in devotional life, church work, and family. Times in early years Genny felt very lonely though surrounded by helping friends and occupied with caring for our children. Our mission to communicate the gospel was first priority, and that meant schedule of meetings and preparation and meeting needs of people first. Family second. Both need nurture.

Other learnings

- learning the *value of a work shared* as compared to a task done alone, sacrifice efficiency for participation and joy to be working together.
- learning to be more relaxed, trusting, expectant of Holy Spirit work to bring conviction of sin and lead to repentance, to prepare for making personal commitment to Christ and request baptism.
- learning to be thankful in everything, the joy of praise living. The value of writing in a journal. Seven years carrying on conversation with the Lord, with myself, reflections. To trust and not be afraid in the storms. He is with us in our sorrows and suffering. In the loss of our infant born prematurely in Kushiro. Pastor Ito of the Presbyterian Church, our first coworkers, and Takio Tanase stood by us. Placing the perfectly formed tiny body in the small wooden box, going out to the crematorium. Repeated with our second baby some years later.
- motivation
- objectives
- rewards of serving
- recreation
- study—self-discipline
- language and culture
- assignments—coming to Japan in the first place. Prepared as best we knew:

—Christian home dedicated to "mission"
—church dedicated to "mission"
—church school dedicated to "mission"
—C.P.S. experience—service for peace. Broad training, theological and practical in church assignment, but knowing little of Japan. Transplant of church we knew. Expectations and interests of Japanese. Christ against culture and Christ through culture. Japanese experience authentic. How can we keep out of way?

January 1953: Our objective, we agreed, is "to preach the Gospel, teach the Word, witness to the transforming power of Christ through life and service, win men and women to Christ and establish them into churches with roots in the 'soil' and dependent only on Christ."

Missionary era. We and they era, Japanese leadership, missionaries holding back. Church era, partnership, serving in the church. The church actively seeking to discern with missionaries' gifts and roles.

1975: Our conviction through all these years continues to be that the missionary presence must be characterized by personal warmth of relationship to Christ and others, joy in sharing the good news, a lifestyle of committed discipleship, a posture of flexibility in working relationships, and a willingness to be mobile for the sake of church growth.... The Holy Spirit has been teaching us to always say "ours" and "us," not "theirs" and "they." It is the Lord's work and together we shall overcome. Hallelujah!

Quote from Bosch about being where God wants me to be. [The intended quote may have been the following, from David J. Bosch. *A Spirituality of the Road.* Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press 1979.] *It is as true of the modern missionary, as it has always been of all the generations of missionaries since Paul, that we will not be able to cope with frustrations, disappointments, disillusionment, and shock unless we know that we belong where we are, and are able to draw courage from that knowledge. In Troas Paul had a vision of a Macedonian appealing to him and saying, "Come across to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:10). Yet upon arrival in Philippi, no county orchestra or reception committee greeted him, rather a whip, and a cell in the local prison. Yet he persevered, with joy, for he knew: "This is where I belong!"*

In this awareness and conviction source of strength. Not always perfect match of gifts and place or assignments, but open door for His strength to be made perfect in weakness and in process of God's leading new doors open and we look back and say God was really with us and He provided in ways beyond our expectations. It was for our good. Truly this was His goal to form Christ in us in the church: Romans 8:28-29.

End of Article

Share experience in 1979 of God's promise to work for good through this illness and this time of "extended tarrying" (Foster). [Richard J. Foster in *Celebration of Discipline.* San Francisco: Harper & Row. 1978, p. 61, says, "God desires for all of us various 'tarrying' places where He can teach us in special ways." He addresses the classical spiritual disciplines which nurture a deeper inner life and joy: meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, guidance, and celebration.]

Quote Martin Niemoller in margin of my Bible at Philippians 1. Written there at least twenty-five years ago. Out of crucible of suffering of World War II,

"I used to be a bearer of the Gospel
Now that Gospel is bearing me."

This I feel also in a unique way in our own situation. In the fellowship of those who are together participating in Christ, partaking of his very nature we are being borne up, nurtured, sustained, strengthened. We'll never finish being bearers of the gospel by God's grace, till our earthly life is completed. And that gospel in the fellowship of Christ's covenant people shall continue bearing us up. All praise to him who is our Lord and coming King, in whose name we are called, sent, and upheld.

1975: The end objective of our mission is not this church in Hokkaido for itself, but this church for the world: *in the power of the Holy Spirit, for Jesus' sake to the glory of God.*

In review

Green Finger of God. By Maurice Sinclair. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1980, 121 pp., U.K. £2.60 (pb)

Reviewed by Albert Buckwalter

This book is a discussion of the meaning of development in the Third World from a Christian and specifically Anglican perspective. Sinclair's aim, stated in the introduction, is "to bring more Christian content" (p. 10) to the subject of development, based on "the central conviction that the church's role in development must be distinctively and explicitly Christian" (p. 10). He hopes the church may come to share his belief that development is logically and inherently necessary from a Christian and scriptural perspective.

The Anglican Church, through its missionary arm, the South American Missionary Society (SAMS), began its work among the Mataco Indians before the turn of this century and among the Toba Pilagá in the late 1920s. These Indians inhabit an area of northern Argentina which forms part of the Gran Chaco, a vast region shared by Bolivia, Argentina, and Paraguay and characterized by impenetrable forests, some grasslands, extensive swamps, and several course-changing, silt-laden rivers. Although the SAMS was primarily concerned with evangelization and church planting, from the beginning it was interested in the economic and social needs of the Indians. In the late 60s and early 70s it inaugurated a vastly expanded program of social outreach to prepare the Indians, as was believed advisable, to face the demands of living in juxtaposition with non-Indians who were invading the area to establish themselves as farmers and cattle ranchers. This is the development program on which *Green Finger of God* is based.

The title of the first chapter, "One Story Half Told," reflects Sinclair's recognition—which I commend—that the promising beginning which he reports is still only a part of the story. The book's ultimate value will certainly depend on the eventual success or failure of the experiment, and I must confess that I believe it cannot but fail. Some of the reasons for probable failure are suggested in this first chapter.

Funding for the project, from the World Council of Churches (WCC) and other agencies, began before a thorough discussion of the following questions asked by the WCC: "Was there adequate participation of local leaders in the planning of projects? Didn't the programme show signs of missionary domination? Wasn't it loaded with a heavy paternalism? Couldn't it be reformulated in more ecumenical terms?" (p. 14). Later a team of specialists evaluated and "fully approved" the program, but they "questioned the economic soundness of the agricultural projects" (p. 14f) and made corresponding recommendations. Unfortunately, Sinclair does not mention the reasons for their doubts.

In chapter two, "Does God Believe in Development?" the author sets forth the scriptural evidence for why he would answer that question with a strong affirmative reply. He states that "a reassertion of God's comprehensive sovereignty is a much needed corrective in all thinking on development" (p. 31). He points out that there must be a coordinated development in which the material, mental, aesthetic, and spiritual aspects are held together. Without God at the center of our theory and practice of development, we "will always lack a vital measure of coherence and integrity, and betray an underlying futility" (p. 31f).

In chapters three to seven Sinclair discusses progressively what he calls "a bare outline of a God-centered approach to development in the spheres of education, agriculture and industry, community life, medicine and politics" (p. 32).

In chapter eight, "A Sufficient Obedience," there is a discussion of what the church ought and ought not do in development as Christians try to live out obedience to the will of God.

The ninth and final chapter, "The Story Must Go On," reiterates the open-ended-ness of the whole discussion, since "seed beds for the following season's crops must be prepared" (p. 118). Sinclair refers to the fact that three other development projects were in process at the time of writing—two in Paraguay and one other in Argentina, all initiated by Protestant missions. It would have been instructive to include a Baptist mission's project in northern Argentina, as well as a third one in Paraguay. This latter project, headed by the Franciscans, had probably not yet been drastically reduced in scope at the time of publication of *Green Finger of God*. But the missioners have now almost totally abandoned what they had originally projected. The main reason I deduce for this change in the Franciscan program was the inadequate response of the Toba people to the project as originally planned for them.

I find Sinclair's treatment of development extremely heartening from a purely religious point of view, since I share the conviction that the basic purpose of life is a spiritual one, and that all else must necessarily revolve around that center where God is Lord; otherwise, life will suffer an underlying futility. However, I find that my own experience with the Indians of northern Argentina (thirty years with the Toba, including twenty with the Pilagá and fifteen with the Mocoví) has led me to some profoundly different conclusions regarding the viability of development as usually conceived.

(The Toba Indians to whom the missionaries of Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana, are relating live in scattered communities throughout approximately the eastern half of Chaco and Formosa provinces of Argentina. Those Toba, or Toba Pilagá, referred to by Sinclair are in reality speakers of one of the dialects of the Pilagá language whose settlements are scattered in the western half of Formosa province.)

During the last twenty-seven of these thirty years I have deliberately endeavored to maintain the stance of full freedom for the Indians to control and direct their own religious life using patterns and expressions which they work out as they examine their own traditional values in the light of the Scriptures. As I consciously opened my heart and mind to the thinking of Indian Christians, it soon became apparent that they wanted me to serve as spiritual counselor and as the means to a fuller command of the Scriptures. In order to do this I sat long hours in the homes of church leaders, primarily listening to their discussions; but also responding to their questions and participating in the conversation in a give-and-take atmosphere. During these extended listening periods I began to see the vast abyss that exists between the culture and philosophy of the Indians and that of the surrounding non-Indians.

As I became aware of the Indians' interpretation of development, I came to sense the ambiguity, even futility, of the non-Indian people's goals, as they endeavor to help the Indian develop. It does not matter whether the goal of development is that the Indians learn to maintain themselves physically and spiritually intact vis-à-vis the non-Indians who have geographically hemmed them in, or that the Indians integrate with the dominant society. In general the Indians' psychological stance does not equip them to live successfully in this new competitive reality. Traditional ways assert themselves continuously to the complete undoing of any economic project visualized by non-Indians.

For instance, many hectares of excellent land have passed from Indian into non-Indian hands seemingly because the Indian did not want to or could not resist the pressure of knowing that another person wanted something he possessed. Indian tradition teaches that a person even anticipates such desires or needs and demonstrates profound humanity by sharing even before asked. Land never was traditionally an item to be bought, sold, traded, or even given away, but more than one good-hearted Indian has allowed the non-Indian to dispossess him of his land because he did not

relish the fight which hanging on to it would have entailed. Nor did he want to live under the unbearable pressure of knowing someone wanted what he had.

Another facet of Indian reality which seems to be in direct conflict with developers' plans is the whole complex of interpersonal relations as it relates to food. Traditionally the hunt was the basic way of obtaining food which was then automatically shared with the group. The next hunting excursion was predicated on the total consumption of the results of the previous excursion. This hand-to-mouth type of living has hardly been altered to this day. An individual may be earning a wage paid him at regular intervals by a non-Indian; but unless something intervenes from outside Indian circles to prevent it, his paycheck will quickly be shared with relatives as was the game from the hunt.

An Indian may attempt to farm, having received credit from some developer in order to get started. He may persevere long work hours which may result in his having a bumper crop. But unless the developer is on hand to oversee the arithmetic of settling accounts, the proceeds may be swallowed up in a short period through the traditional system of sharing the spoils. To scandalize the developer even more, the would-be farmer may announce that he is now quitting farming! "Someone else can occupy the field next year," he might say. He may even sell the equipment for which he has not yet paid!

It is no surprise when the developer becomes a sort of policeman who must be ever present, ever watching, anticipating every possible Indian countermove in order to make sure that proper procedures are followed. The development which is being visualized in *Green Finger of God* seems to be impossible without constant supervision and actual management by non-Indians. This being the case, dare we call it development?

Entrusting management of capital to Indian hands, a necessary feature of development as it is now envisioned, can have catastrophic results within Indian society. Natural human inter-family rivalries are often exacerbated to the breaking point where families can hardly tolerate each other's presence, even in the church, until the offending outside capital is removed. This is especially likely to happen when a mission is obliged to select which Indians will be favored with their development plan.

It appears to me that the large majority of the Chaco Indians prefer to work for non-Indian employers as day laborers, since living from hunting is now not an option in most areas, nor does farming seem to interest them. Those few who are farming invariably need a sympathetic non-Indian as their seasonal source of credit, since even the most acculturated cannot manage capital successfully.

Wouldn't it be preferable, then, to accept seriously the inevitability of this type of development, rather than pouring millions into well-thought-out, yet ill-conceived, projects? These projects are often posited on unproven assumptions and are doomed to disappoint and disillusion the planners and the planned-for alike. They may destroy even the possibility of healthy interpersonal relationships in the future.

When a development program fails, the situation is often measurably worse than it was before the project began, because of the difficulties of cross-cultural communication. This is particularly true if the unfortunate developer happens to be a missionary or a pastor who is openly committed to planting and nurturing the church as his or her highest goal. Many Indians have told me that this or that developer is a liar! These damning accusations against developers come out of unsuccessful programs in which the Indians perceive the words and actions of non-Indians to be in conflict. If we truly believe we ought to be concerned above everything else with the kingdom of God, surely we will want to relate to the Indian Christians in such a way that our actions will not vitiate our words. We will not want to cause conflict between Indian individuals and groups.

I recommend this book to all missionaries and developers on the condition that Sinclair (or someone equally involved in the project discussed) write an adequate sequel analyzing in depth and with equal candor what follows these apparently promising initial years.

I join Sinclair as he shares his Christian faith with the Indians of the Argentine Chaco. But I feel I must part ways with him when he believes his Christian faith impels him to participate in the usual development projects designed for these people. My Christian faith, in contradistinction, impels me not to participate in such projects. I have observed the inevitable bitterness and alienation engendered within the Indian community and church from which even missionaries do not escape unscathed.

Albert Buckwalter has served in the Argentine Chaco with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana, since 1950.

Into All the World—A Biography of Max Warren. By Frederick William Dillistone. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980, 251 pp., £8.25

Reviewed by Wilbert R. Shenk

Upon learning the news of John R. Mott's death in 1955, Max Warren wrote in his diary, "It is not unfair to link him with St. Paul, Xavier and Carey as one of the few men who have caught the imagination of the Christian world from the point of view of the missionary enterprise." Warren himself was just such an influential leader in his own generation.

Max Warren (1904-77) was born to missionary parents and spent his early years in India. He followed his older brother to Cambridge, where Warren was the popular all-around student—athlete and scholar. He also identified with Anglican evangelicalism. But already at that stage of life he found himself unable to tolerate some of the narrowness of mind and spirit which marked evangelicalism as he experienced it. Throughout his life he identified with this part of the church both as loyalist and friendly critic—trying to broaden and deepen the intellectual base for what he considered a stuffy and sterile dogmatism, while applauding its commitment to evangelism and personal devotion.

One of Warren's heroes was Henry Venn, who had served as senior secretary of the Church Missionary Society for thirty-one years in the nineteenth century. Warren came to the same position exactly 100 years later and served the CMS twenty-one years. One of Warren's avocations was to read and index the vast Venn correspondence. He never found time to write the biography of Venn which had been brewing in his mind for many years. He settled rather for a collection of Venn writings which he selected and for which he wrote a long introduction (*To Apply the Gospel*, 1971). Warren's affinity for Venn was based on his admiration for Venn's commanding influence on the wider missionary movement and his keen insight into missionary problems.

Many who read Warren's autobiography, *Crowded Canvas* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), felt they learned more about his contemporaries than about Warren himself. Dillistone fully remedies this deficiency in this biography which exudes the vitality which was Max Warren. A series of words describes Warren and his contribution:

Self-discipline. Warren early formed the habit of daily Bible reading and intercession. He wrote extensively in his diary daily for over fifty years. He read widely in history and current affairs.

Balance. He was both a fine athlete and top-rank scholar; he combined warm personal piety with intellectual vigor; he made a missionary commitment at age sixteen but tested methods to ensure their consistency with missionary goals; he was both evangelical and ecumenical.

Presence. Warren was a man of commanding presence.

Prescience. He took the long view and correctly anticipated the direction the tides of history were moving.

Interpreter. One of Max Warren's great contributions was to interpret these changes intelligently and cogently to his generation through his writing and lecturing. Especially the *CMS Newsletter*, under his leadership, came to have an unequalled influence on the missionary world. He produced nearly one book per year throughout his tenure as CMS secretary.

Anglican. Warren was a devoted member of the Anglican communion. He preferred that the church remain an established church. But more than most missiologists, he brooded over the inherent tensions between the church and political power.

Missionary statesman. He was "totally committed to the missionary enterprise." Warren was a missionary leader without being an administrator.

Wilbert R. Shenk is Vice President for Overseas Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana.

African Christian Spirituality. Edited by Aylward Shorter. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1980, 160 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Levi Keidel

Aylward Shorter, a Roman Catholic priest with strong academic credentials and over twenty years of experience in East Africa, has assembled thirty-one essays and poems which reveal what African Christian writers have in mind for the development of their continent. The twenty African authors include presidents, statesmen, bishops, and theologians. Their common concern is that the positive factors of their traditional culture, which are also reinforced by the ethics of the Christian gospel, be built into the social fabric of developing Africa.

Here is a sampling of such cultural factors: The Bible and African culture make no separation between the secular and the sacred; true spirituality penetrates equally all levels of human experience. Traditional Africans have lived close to the soil, close to the seasons, and in harmony with the rhythms of the created universe. Jesus' command that we love our neighbor and minister to human need around us is reinforced by the way people lived and cared for one another in the traditional African extended family.

The authors insist that love is the only power capable of changing people into responsible social beings; it is the only force which binds people to God who created and who recreates the material universe upon which they depend for survival. Hence, the focus of development must be the human community; needs which exist in that community must be the primary factor which determines the behavior of individual members of the community. Each must live for the well-being of others.

The vision these writers share is aligned with neither East nor West. While they identify with the socialistic aspects of Marxism, they reject outright its atheism, its inhumanity, its denial of love as a necessary bond to human community. While they insist upon the importance of Western technology to develop their material resources and thereby to improve their standard of living, they decry the Western abuse of technology which they feel has led to rampant mindless consumerism and has promoted a mad competitiveness to accumulate material wealth. This has debilitated Western life of its spiritual dimension and has disrupted human community by introducing a class structure; some revel in affluence while others languish in poverty. Meanwhile those in power direct an unbroken flow of valuable natural resources into the maw of military weaponry to defend this way of life.

These authors propose an original and alternative ideology: what they believe to be a revolutionary Christian humanism which insists upon worshiping God as his responsible creatures, and upon improving the human social condition.

I am impressed with the perception and vision of these writers. Their idealism is stimulating. It is reassuring to know that there are Africans of opinion-forming stature whose thinking counterbalances that of power-hungry heads of state who exploit their positions to inflate their egos and to increase their personal wealth at a terrible cost to those they govern.

However, realizing such a vision for the social development of the African continent poses some formidable challenges. While these positive social aspects were a part of its traditional culture, they constitute only select threads from a total cultural fabric, and not the strongest threads at that. Many of its threads may be considered neutral to human development. Others militate against such development. Forces which most powerfully shaped traditional Bantu African society were witchcraft, which often enslaved people to poverty, and reverence for ancestral spirits, which resisted social change.

While certain positive ethical principles were scrupulously observed within the clan or tribe, outside it they were reversed. For example, stealing, lying, and abuse of human rights were unacceptable within the clan; however, outside the clan, they were readily exploited. I cannot agree with Kaunda when he lauds traditional culture for the honor it accorded the aged. Our eldest generation of Zairian church leaders praise Christianity for teaching that the aged are not to be discarded like tattered cloths, but are to be cared for and respected as human beings. This philosophy for African development gives rise to a key question: Can select threads—which have functioned effectively within the confines of tribal units—drawn from a traditional culture now be reinforced with a thin overlay of Christianity and serve as control wires to guide and direct the development of a continent?

Nevertheless, such voices are welcome. Why haven't we heard more of them? Are they only Catholic, or are opinion leaders of Protestant persuasion also pressing out such frontiers of thought? Wherever they are, they need every encouragement. Perhaps they can leave a better example for social development to their successors than they have found in the West.

Levi Keidel serves in Zaire with Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas.

Book Brief

Two Ways to Look South: A Guide to Latin America. By R. Dwight Wilhelm. New York: Friendship Press, 1980, 64 pp., $2.25 (pb). The topical approach to the study of Latin America outlined by the author follows closely the content of *The Cry of My People* and *In Every Person Who Hopes.* The geographical approach suggested takes the form of an imaginary trip. The list of supplemental resource materials and the proposed learning activities make this book a useful study guide for individuals or groups who are serious about looking south.

Editorial

The articles which comprise this issue do not speak to a common theme. Yet several threads hold the whole together.

1. Crossing boundaries is at the heart of mission. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defines boundary crisply: "That which indicates or fixes a limit or extent; that which marks a bound, as a territory." We commit an error if we see crossing boundaries only in terms of going from one country to another. That, to be sure, remains an important part of missionary concern. But boundaries, in myriad forms, pervade the life of every human being. Boundaries are essential to human existence; boundaries also can become destructively demonic.

The typical congregation in Indiana appears to have as many problems with boundaries as the congregation in India set amid a society noted for its rigid class system. Each congregation, wherever it is situated in the world, needs to find the creative balance between the sustaining nurture of its members and winsomeness in its relations with those outside the household of faith.

Paul Hiebert deals with this question of cultural boundaries at another level: the contact between two cultures which is made possible by the ability of certain representatives of two dominant cultures to meet and communicate to a degree not possible by the majority of members of either of the two main cultures. He argues that this is the primary means by which the cultural boundary can be breached, enabling intercultural exchange.

Ralph Buckwalter was among those committed to crossing boundaries for the sake of the gospel. While he cared deeply and nurtured the community of faith, he never lost his conviction that he must also move out into the larger community to meet new people.

Whatever these boundaries be—cultural, religious, linguistic, or social—they do not change the fact that human beings have basic needs to belong, to be loved, to live with a sense of well-being, to be nurtured and sustained by family relationships. The good news about Jesus Christ compels the Christian to witness that through the cross reconciliation is possible. Cultural realities are not to be denied but transferred.

2. The quality of the life of the witness is crucial. Indeed, the integrity of the witness depends on the integrity of the life lived by the entire community of faith. Such a quality of life does not simply happen. It is the product of discipline both conscious and unconscious. Discipline must be applied on both the personal and group levels. In an age which puts a premium on the spontaneous—because of the supposed freedom which this implies—we need to learn the ancient truth that creativity demands discipline. Form and structure enable freedom.

Integrity in witness is based on several dimensions. It arises from personal discipline and commitment. It is undergirded by training. We do well to study the example of Jesus and the twelve disciples from the standpoint of the type and quality of training he gave them. Integrity in witness reflects a sense of call or vocation. One lives out who one is. This is more than a mere job. My calling defines who I am. The witness is other-directed, expressed in being accessible to other people. The vogue phrase of the 1960s, picked up from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, described Jesus as the "man for others." Jesus appeared on the stage of history as the suffering servant with all that this implies in terms of selflessness. Whenever an individual or community becomes preoccupied with programs and schemes which are self-serving, all integrity in witness is lost.

Such integrity is in contrast to the prevailing view of politicians and political parties in today's world. The cynicism which greets politicians stems directly from the fact that the average voter is tired of the political game—saying the right things to get elected, but acting in line with the demands of special-interest groups once in office. In the world no one has yet found an alternative to systems based on self-interest despite the pent-up frustration and pleas for justice and compassion. Jesus modeled a different way which witnesses to the power of divine love directing and controlling human actions.

3. Witness is always response to the other. A lesson we have been too slow in learning is that we must win the right to be heard. We must rid ourselves of the self-deception which allowed us to believe that we have served, even in the name of God, when we transferred certain technical information or skills. That is not to decry such aid, but it is to suggest that genuine inter-cultural communication demands far more than a quick dash of technical know-how. In a face-to-face culture people expect to meet the outsider in a variety of ways, often prescribed by ancient ritual, over a period of time, before any exchange can take place. We are continually reminded by first-hand experience how many years invested in friendship and ordinary living together are required to produce fruit in the kingdom of God.

In societies facing rapid cultural change which inevitably causes serious social dislocation, we need to learn what the points of hurting are. In cultures entering the twilight hour, as many feel the West is now doing, observable depression weighs down the spirits of many people. Rather than being a package which we ship from one place to another, the good news of God's love comes in the form of sensitive, caring individuals who allow that love to speak through them to people who know they need that love, but have not found it in a saving form.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

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Principles of Communic.

① One-way communic. - message-centered approach. (slide)

We must be both message & audience-centered

② Show the figure (slide) of selective exposure - some messages filtered out at this stage

analysis for pertinence takes place - Attention - some filtered out at this stage (largely on basis of physical properties)

Retention

Response

Is it pertinent to attitudes, needs, lifestyle. Or it may be mis-comprehended or remembered for a little while & then forgotten.

They say that of every 100 people who are exposed to a TV commercial, & do not leave the room or divert their attention elsewhere,

30 actually attend to its content & know what's being said.

15 understand the content (1/2 of those who gave attention to it initially

only 5 retain its content in active memory 24 hours later

This kind of selective screening takes place in all areas of life; politics, education, business, and all other areas

We should not assume that religious communication is immune from selective perception. It was discovered in one study that most of the Bibles distributed to a particular group of people found their way into the trash can. Can you guess why?

Another research study for an organization found to its dismay that no more than 6,500 out of a possible total listening audience of nearly 8,000,000 (%) tuned to its religious programming on FM radio. ~~When~~

Even in churches, when research studies are done (usually through carefully-prepared questionnaires) similar patterns emerge. ~~People have many unmet needs that only the church can satisfy. And yet the church is not addressing those needs & doesn't know its people well enough to know what they are. It is too message-oriented by way of one-way communication.~~

The heart of the Good news is "Change". The possibility of change. "Metanoia" or "Transformation". And we musn't spiritualize it all away. It's also change for the here and now. A moving from death to life. It's individual change - but it's also for ~~social~~ homes & for societies. The "Kingdom of God" is a social concept. And there is a King. Don't separate the King from His Kingdom. Where Jesus Christ is, there ~~is~~ is going to be transforming power at works. But ~~He~~ works from within. It is ~~the power of~~ not manipulative. But it does lead to repentance and turning. It may start

small - with a few people. But it will be most transforming when it begins to burn like a fire - a cleansing, renewing power of love that moves out from the center into all the relationships of life. Not one of us is the King. And not one of us is the Power and not one of us is the truth or has all the truth. And not one of us is righteous or just or pure. But we know who the King is - and who is the power, even over death. And we know who is truth and we know who is just and righteous & pure. Jesus Christ.

He can, begins & continues to transform us ~~[illegible]~~ in our ~~[illegible]~~ own lives & in our family life, our community life, our national & international life. In all our relationships Christ wants to be enthroned. But he thinks a lot differently from the society in which we swim like fish in a cultural sea.

Christians, when they are few in number in any cultural setting are going to be ~~[illegible]~~ a counter-cultural witness in some important ways.

Christian Human Factors in Communication

~~Those who are different from us~~

1. Communication is involvement. It's built on a relationship. Think of the word "Communion" – an intimate sharing in the life of Christ.

2. You need to win the right to be heard (Story of Sam's father & Dr. Will Blair)

3. Communication is a process involving genuine listening & learning as well as sharing and teaching.

4. Meaning cannot be directly transferred. Truth is truth but understanding of it must be built up inside the receivers' frame of reference.

5. Communication is what is perceived & heard – not only what is said.
Good speaking is not simply a matter of pleasant words, but of words, symbols & other signals which help the hearer develop meanings. ~~Many~~ filters stand between the speaker & the hearer: experience, culture, ~~[illegible]~~, degree of interest, physical environment, etc.
A lot of filters stand between the sender & the receiver of a message.
~~(story of Mrs. Underwood & the Cholera epidemic)~~ (danger of one-way communic.) – see other sheet.
Silent communication – reactions, etc.

6. Be aware of multiple audiences. Try to find some way of directing the whole content of the Good News to affect networks of relationships & ultimately right down to the individual.

7. What is your image of the people among whom you are Communicating? What do you think of them? Do you even begin to understand them? What attitude do you have toward them? Do you look down on them? Do you look up to them?

8. The audience's image of the Communicator influences initial acceptability of the message
   a. the importance of what the audience thinks of the Communicator (Story of Mrs. Underwood during Cholera epidemic)
   b. the initial reactions to the message brot by that Communicator (what kind of preparation has there been?)

9. Content of the message is of great importance but the medium through which it comes may either strengthen, obscure or distort it.
i.e. Same message – preached, given over radio, written in a tract, on T.V, etc. will be perceived quite differently.

10. Communication effectiveness normally decreases with increasing size of the audience.

~~[illegible] for 2 people to share understanding than for 2 or 3~~

You need to find ways of breaking a large congregation into smaller units for effective ministry. 영락 + 순복음교회

11. Physical + social + psychological experiences of ~~the communication in dialogue~~ people affect ~~the form of effective communications~~ understandings + connotations.

A person born + bred by the sea, who earns his living as a fisherman, will not talk about the same things as a nomadic desert dweller. Though the basic message may be the same, the way in which it is expressed must be different if real comprehension is expected. Even where the same word is used, different people will have different associations in connection with it. Even simple words like water
sailor
farmer
city-dweller
someone living in Sahel region of Africa

bread

father to someone whose father was cruel

~~[illegible]~~

~~Gloray~~

~~homely (homey)~~

~~12.~~ A person coming from a society that is group-oriented has a dif experience than one coming from an individually-oriented society, where the individual is more imp. than the group.

12. Cultural patterns of a society fundamentally influence the way in which effective communication takes place.

Effective communication will ~~[illegible]~~ come from within the forms unique to that culture.

i.e. drums, or dances, or story-telling or art, or music or ways of seeking advice + counsel - or whatever.

Some have said, Seek redemptive analogies from within the culture. Don't try to transfer forms artificially from one culture to another.

~~13. Existing beliefs + value systems deeply affect reaction to a "Change" message when that message~~

13. There are different level's of beliefs + values which must be recognized in trying to reach the heart (or inner core of deeply-held values + assumptions).

not threatened by change — a) peripheral level - style of clothing, kind of colors you like, style of house or church

changed only when authority followed is changed — b) authority level - what authority does the person rely on for the strength of his beliefs?

school teacher?
Church minister?
village headman
book - i.e. Koran

c) Personal experience level
(not so much subject to reason or what someone has taught except as confirmed by one's own personal experience. This leads to beliefs that are very persistent.

Korean woman with five daughters who prays to Buddha + has a son.

d) Core values or basic assumptions of a person or a society. These are hardest to change because they are widely shared by the society + not subject to question or challenge. They are maintained by group pressure - especially from peers. Change at this level is much easier if a whole group can begin to change together + be mutually supportive. Change at this level is so profound that it's going to affect your whole perspective + start to change behavior patterns, some of which have been in a deep groove or rut.

14. Messages are heard within the listener's frame of reference.
Not everyone thinks the way I do. Learn the audience's experience + comprehension rather than just your own ability to use some "techniques".

15. Remember that "feelings" and impressions often precede rational or cognitive understandings. Be sensitive to people's feelings. ~~At the level of "core" values + deeply held assumptions, change comes slowly. Communication affecting this level must be rational but deeply respectful + with the impact of the love.~~

Go to my paper

29 16. Individual change comes in relation to a relevant reference group for that individual.

Change does not take place in a vacuum. All individuals are related to groups of one kind or another. Any change in the individual produces reaction in the group. If the reaction is negative + the person values group membership, the change may be forgotten or denied in order to retain the support of the group

This principle is especially applicable in fundamental matters of value that lie at the core of a person. These values (which are the foundation for beliefs, attitude, + behavior in an individual) are based on the groups to which an indiv. belongs either by birth or by voluntary association. Therefore, attempts to change beliefs + values must be concerned w the group, not only the indiv. Sometimes the group must be willing to change before the individual can be reached.

17. Change + Transformation is usually a process which takes time and preparation. It involves both the private world + the public world.

Awareness - ~~of an alternative to present~~

Interest -

Evaluation -

Choice -

Implementation - making visible in action a choice already made internally

Readjustment - of behavior patterns, sometimes of friends, even lifestyle that results from the decision made

Monday — July 28
a. Rel's of Old Korea
b Discussion + Papers

Tuesday:
a. Korean Christianity July 29
b) Papers + disc.

Wed.
a) Principles of Communication July 30
b) Papers + Disc.

Thurs
a. Niebuhr - SHM July 31
b Papers + disc.

Friday — Aug. 1
a. ~~Contextualization in Africa~~ ~~Speech~~ More on Language SHM.
b). Papers + Disc.

Mon. Aug. 4
a. Sang Lee
b. disc. + Rogers

Tuesday, Aug. 5
a. Nepal
b.

Wednesday, Aug. 6
a. Apical Contextualization (Ind. Churches)
b.

Thursday, Aug. 7
a. Contextualizing Theology
b.

Friday, Aug. 8
a. ~~"~~ Foolishness to the Greeks EFM.
b. + SHM on the Moonies

CHRISTIAN TRUTH ACROSS CULTURAL BARRIERS
(Missions in a Pluralistic World at Home and Abroad)

S 330/S 730
Summer 1986

Samuel Moffett
Eileen Moffett

Course Description:
In this course's focus on Christianity and Culture on all six continents, attention will be given to sharpening Christian awareness of local and global socio-cultural distinctions; and to identifying what is the truth to be conveyed and how it can be communicated effectually across and between the culture of the first century (the Bible), the culture of the 20th century Christian communicator, and the various cultures of present-day receptors. Discussions will involve principles of communication, and contextualization.

Course Requirements:
Required reading: Lesslie Newbigin, Foolishness to the Greeks (Eerdmans, 1986)
H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (if unavailable, one of the following:
David J. Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally (pp. 1-141 plus three other chapters of your own choice); or Charles H. Kraft, Christianity in Culture (pp. 1-115; 169-178; 261-290).
One-page reviews of each of two books chosen from the Recommended Reading list.
Two five-page papers on subjects chosen from the Suggested Topics list. These papers will be presented for discussion, usually in the second period of each day.
There will be no final examination.

Schedule: Class hours 9:00 a.m.-10:20; 11:00-12:15 p.m.

Outline (tentative)

Week 1
July 21 - Introductions; Christian faith and non-Christian culture: the interaction.
July 22 - Principles of communication; What is culture?
July 23 - Culture: the barrier of race.
July 24 - The barriers of language. Discussion.
July 25 - The barriers of religion. Discussion.

Week 2
July 28 - Culture: ~~Nepal~~, a case study. Slides, discussion.
July 29 - Religious barriers: ~~African independent churches and religion~~. Paper and Discussion
July 30 - Religious barriers: ~~Korean traditional religions~~. Slides, discussion.
July 31 - A classical definition: Niebuhr's Christianity and Culture. Discussion, papers
August 1- Jesus and His disciples. Papers, discussion

Week 3
August 4- Asian-American Churches (Dr. Lee). Discussion, papers.
August 5- Barriers of sex: Women and mission. Discussion, papers.
August 6- Contextualizing Theology Discussion, papers.
August 7- Western cultural barriers to Christianity. Discussion, papers.
August 8- Review; summaries and discussion. Thoughts in closing.

Recommended Reading

Louis J. Luzbetak, The Church and Cultures (Techny, Il: Divine Word, 1970)
Eugene Nida, Customs and Cultures (N.Y.: Harper, 1954)
Message and Mission (N.Y.: Harper, 1960)
Paul G. Hiebert, Cultural Anthropology (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)
Mark K. Taylor, Beyond Explanation: Religious Dimensions in Cultural Anthropology (Macon, Ga: Mercer, 1986)
Don Richardson, Peace Child (Glendale, CA: G/L Publ., 1974)
Bruce Nichols, Contextualization: A Theology of Gospel and Culture. (Downers Grove, Il:IVP, 1979)
Charles H. Kraft, Communicating the Gospel God's Way. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1979.)
John Stott and R.T. Coote, ed., Gospel and Culture. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1979)
Marguerite G. Kraft, Worldview and the Communication of the Gospel. (Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1978)
Carl F. Hallencreutz, New Approaches to Men of Other Faiths. (Geneva: WCC, 1970)
J.N.D. Anderson, Christianity and Comparative Religion. (Downers Grove, Il:IVP, 1974)
D.T. Niles, Buddhism and the Claims of Christianity. (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1967)
G.H. Anderson and T. F. Stransky, ed. Mission Trends No. 5. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981)
Mission Trends No. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976)
Phil Parshall, Bridges to Islam. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983)
Donald McGavran, Ethnic Realities (Pasadena: Wm. Carey, 1979)
W.A. Visser 't Hoft, No Other Name (Naperville, Il: SCM, 1963)
Tetsunao Yamamori and C.R. Taber, Christopaganism or Indigenous Christianity? (Pasadena, Wm Carey, 1975)
Alfred C. Krass, Evangelizing Neopagan North America. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1982)
Five Lanterns at Sundown. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978)
James Engel and H.W. Norton, What's Gone Wrong With the Harvest? (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975)
James F. Engel, Contemporary Christian Communications (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1979)
John C.B. and Ellen C. Webster, The Church and Women in the Third World. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985)

Topics for Papers
(Including one bibliographical suggestion for each, as a starter)

Basic Principles of Communication
(James F. Engel, Contemporary Christian Communications)

Models for Missionary Communication
(David J. Hesselgrave, Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally)

Understanding Worldview: Ideas and Values of Receptors
(Marguerite G. Kraft, Worldview and the Communication of the Gospel)

Dynamic Equivalence in Bible Translation
(Charles H. Kraft, Christianity in Culture, pp. 261-312)

A Case Study in Bible Translation: (1) Wycliff
or (2) A specific translation

Problems in Textual Translation of the Bible.
(Eugene Nida and Wm. D. Reyburn, Meaning Across Cultures)

What Is Culture?
(Paul Hiebert, Cultural Anthropology pp. 25-87)

The Relation of Religion to Culture
(Christopher Dawson, Religion and Culture)

Religion and Anthropology.
(Mark K. Taylor, Beyond Explanation)

Religion as a Barrier to Communication of the Christian Faith
(1) Confucianism (K.S. Latourette, History of Christian Mission in China, pp. 131-155)
or (2) Buddhism (D. T. Niles, Buddhism and the Claims of Christianity)
or (3) Shintoism (John M. L. Young, The Two Empires in Japan)
or (4) Hinduism (M.M. Thomas, The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance)
or (5) Islam (Phil Parshall, Bridges to Islam)

Contextualizing the Faith (Religion)
(1) India (M.M. Thomas, The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance)
or (2) Buddhism (Donald K. Swearer, Dialogue: The Key to Understanding Other Religions)
or (3) Southeast Asia (Koshe Koyana, Waterbuffalo Theology)
or (4) West Africa (Lamim Sanneh, West African Christianity, pp. 168 ff.)
or (5) Central Africa (Marie-Louise Martin, Kimbangu, An African Prophet)
(Sheila S. Walker, The Religions Revolution in the Ivory Coast.)
or (6) Chile (C.L. d'Epinay, Haven of the Masses)

Topics for Papers - continued

Caste and Christianity in India
(Donald McGavran, Ethnic Realities.)

Contextualization: Where Must It Stop?
(Hendrik Kraemer, The Christian Mission in a Non-Christian World)
(J.N.D. Anderson, Christianity and Comparative Religion)

Has the West Contextualized Christianity Too Far?
(Alfred Krass, Evangelizing Neopagan North America)

Theology and Contextualization: Is There a Standard?
(Bruce C.E. Fleming, Contextualization of Theology)

Further Reading Recommendations (on desk reserve)

H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture

Eugene A. Nida, Customs and Cultures

Louis J. Luzbetak, The Church and Cultures

Charles A. Kraft & T. N. Wisley, Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity

Wm. A. Smalley, Readings in Missionary Anthropology II

Jacob A. Loewen, Cultures and Human Values: Christian Intervention in Anthropological Perspective

J.N.D. Anderson, Christianity and Comparative Religion

Henry Osborn Taylor, The Emergence of Christian Culture in the West

Eugene A. Nida, Message and Mission

Marvin K. Mayers, Christianity Confronts Culture

Lin Yutang, From Pagan to Christian

Liu Wu-Chi, A Short History of Confucian Philosophy

D. T. Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture

G.H. Anderson & T.F. Stransky, Mission Trends #5: Faith Meets Faith

G.H. Anderson & T.F. Stransky, Mission Trends #3: Third World Theologies

T.M. Kitwood, What Is Human?

COMMUNICATION AND WORLD EVANGELIZATION

By Viggo Søgaard

Communication is essential to evangelism

It should be obvious to consider communications at a world consultation on evangelization because evangelism cannot be envisaged without communication. Previous conferences on evangelization, however, have not grappled with that issue. Since we are communicators of the good news of Jesus Christ, communications understanding is of central importance.

The most outstanding example of communication ever made to mankind was embodied in the coming of Jesus Christ. He was the full and ultimate communication of God to man - 'the express image of His person'. As Jesus lived among people, they looked at Him and saw God. They heard Jesus speak, and listened to God. They saw Jesus at work, and they were viewing God at work.

Jesus Christ the incarnation and ultimate communication of God, challenged His disciples, ancient and modern, to let the world see Him, hear Him, and witness Him at work through them. In that sense, we as Christians become the communication medium through which God speaks to man. In Ghana I noticed a sign on a truck, 'I see the man, but I do not know his party'. People see us, and if what they see is positive and attractive, they will also be interested in the party we proclaim.

As communicators let us seriously consider communications theory during this consultation. In particular, we should focus on the problems that block effective Christian communications. Doing that, we will discover some causes of ineffective evangelism.

A. Communication Breakdown

'Let the Earth Hear His Voice!' With that stirring Scripture and Lausanne theme ringing in our ears, we cannot afford to remain blind to anything that would muffle that voice and hinder our communications.

Possibly the first challenge is one that we may be reluctant to consider. It involves a willingness to face squarely the problems that hinder effective Christian communication, but apart from such self-criticism, however, we are destined to continue making noises and print words without communicating.

The second challenge, coming out of the first is an unwillingness to accept necessary changes in plans, programs and methods. Are we willing to let someone else produce our program in Manila (instead of Wheaton) and provide the finances without receiving credit? Christian communications - in common with all areas of discipleship - calls for sacrifice and for crucifixion of many of our most cherished ideas, names and methods.

We seem to be at ease talking about the problems, but are often reluctant to really apply the principles in practical communications projects. Let me therefore cite some of the root causes of Christian communication breakdown:

1. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM PROGRAM ORIENTATION RATHER THAN FOCUSING OUR ATTENTION ON THE LISTENER/READER/VIEWER AND HIS NEEDS.

In evangelical Christianity we have focused on the 'program'. We are concerned about saying it 'the right way'. We have made programs for all and everywhere,

giving the message we want all to hear. Too seldom have we, like Jesus stopped and been interested in the listener and his real problems and needs. We have rarely asked our brother, Why are you crying? Whe. does it hurt you? Why are you sad? What is your problem? and then gone back and made programs that are relevant to him. We are too busy making our program.

2. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM A MEDIA ORIENTATION RATHER THAN LOOKING AT THE JOB TO BE DONE, AND THEN SELECTING THE MOST SUITABLE MEDIA

Christians have often looked at communications media with awe and wonder, almost treating them as having life and power in themselves. So instead of treating media as tools in the Church's strategy, strategy has developed around a particular medium. We have used terms as, 'I am a radioman' or 'I am a literature-man', or some other kind of man. Just think of craftsmen talking about 'screwdriver men' or 'hammer men'! If radio-people go into one corner and plan strategy, film-people into another corner and literature into a third, no effective strategy can be planned. This is especially so if all 'church-people' - the 'planters', the 'growers' and the 'reapers' are excluded altogether.

Let us remind ourselves of G W Peter's words at Lausanne -

> '. . . a method which may be very effective at one time, at one place, among one people may not be effective at another time, another place, another people. In fact, it may prove disadvantage is if not disastrous. Therefore, a method-bound movement cannot become an effective world movement. Neither can it last very long. It will soon be relegated to the outdated and the outworn.'

Somebody has said that we are leaving the age of technology and entering 'the age of communication'. Let us hope this is true.

3. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM MASSIVE WESTERN PRODUCTIONS RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON LOCAL PRODUCTIONS AND COMMUNICATION ARTS THAT ARE UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED BY THE AUDIENCE.

It is sad to realize that this is more a problem for evangelicals than for other Christians. Church-leaders across Asia lament the fact that so many radio and television programs are produced in the West, or at best translated from Western productions. The same goes for evangelistic methods, films - and even theological education. Much is just not relevant even though thousands of dollars are spent. One of the strong factors behind the creation of the Asia Christian Communications Fellowship (ACCF) was a desire by Asian churches and communicators to be able to speak with a reasonably strong voice to our Western brothers, trying to get them to understand. It has been my experience that our Indian Brothers - and those from Bali, Thailand and Nigeria, have far better and more refined ways of communication than we have in the West. It should be a rare exception to put a US produced radio program on a station in Manila.

4. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN CHURCH LEADERS AND SO-CALLED COMMUNICATORS.

Such misunderstandings have often led to separate strategies. It can always be questioned if the misunderstandings are due to envy, pride or some other causes but it is a situation that hinders effective evangelism. It is closely related to

the following point.

5. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM PARA-CHURCH CONTROL RATHER THAN PUTTING COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS INTO THE HANDS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH, WHERE THEY BELONG.

Much Christian communication is controlled by para-church groups, and most para-church groups are controlled by overseas organizations and finance. It is beautiful to claim that they are arms of the church, but if they are arms, they should also be controlled and used by the body. A mutual concern and cooperation between para-church groups and local churches is mandatory to effective evangelism. The para-church groups may have all the best intentions, but if they just come into a country, doing their own thing, hiring staff at high salaries etc., they may in fact do more harm than good. It may look like a slow and narrow path, but effective evangelism strategies cannot by-pass the local church. Some para-church groups have learned this lesson, but many still have to do so.

6. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM THEORETICIANS, WHO DO NOT MASTER PRACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS, AND FROM PRACTITIONERS, WHO DO NOT MASTER THEORY.

'We just don't have time' has often been the answer, when trying to persuade people to take part in communications training. They are too busy producing, producing and producing. They have no time to evaluate and to ask if anybody is listening, or even more important, does anybody understand. Practitioners, who do not master theory, will often work in the dark, not knowing if they are achieving their goals. On the other hand, there are theoreticians who do not master practical communications. A report from India last year suggested that all teachers of communication must have proved the principles they teach in practical communications projects.

7. WE ARE SUFFERING FROM A SERIOUS LACK OF CREDIBILITY, AND MAY BE EVEN MORE AN UNWILLINGNESS TO BE FRANK ABOUT THE CAUSES OF CREDIBILITY GAPS.

If you are not believable, they do not believe what you say! The church in many places is faced with a serious lack of credibility, but fortunately this is changing in some places. The reasons for lack of credibility may be because of political history, methods used, lack of good testimony, irrelevant approaches, lack of understanding of culture and the consciousness of the various social groups. If the church, as my listener sees it, is involved in splits, arguments and scandal, he is not likely going to pay any attention to what I say be it on radio, television or at a crusade meeting.

B. COMMUNICATION UNDERSTANDING

Communication theory has been described in numerous books. That theory is now quite refined and applied to Christian communication as well. A crucial consideration for us therefore, is the application of sound communication theory in practical evangelism. The question is not merely one of getting a certain message or program to a particular group of people. A more basic consideration is how can I achieve realistic dialogue with a group of people in their cultural context and frame of mind? It is not only a question of 'reaching' somebody else (i.e. one-way communication) but he must also reach me. Dialogue requires an active acceptance of and involvement by the other person, so that bridges of mutual trust can be built. Good communication projects will therefore not seek to disassociate a person from his present cultural context, but rather seek to penetrate and permeate his culture, so that

understanding can be achieved.

We should also remember that communication is not just an event it is a process that takes time. Or, evangelism is not just one step but a process of steps. The sower who just scatters the seed, hoping some of it will fall on fertile ground, cannot expect a plentiful harvest. Effective evangelism must also concern itself with the preparation of the soil, plowing, fertilizing etc. After sowing comes a time of watering and care, and then comes harvest. Finally, the conservation of the fruit and re-using it for further and even more plentiful harvest.

The most important thing is not always what you say, but what your listener heard you saying. We may be able to say it the 'right way', may be even 'reach' a person but if he is not listening, he will not be able to hear. His ears may be blocked by misunderstandings or by the confusion of strange words and concepts. If he is not listening we must find out what is causing the communications breakdown.

He will most likely have, in his memory, stored information and experience concerning Christianity. If that information and experience is positive, he will probably listen, but if it is negative he will most likely not listen to your message. We must therefore seek detailed information about our listener his understanding and attitudes if we are to be effective communicators. This requires serious research which both can be and will be used in strategy development.

C. COMMUNICATION AND THE CHURCH

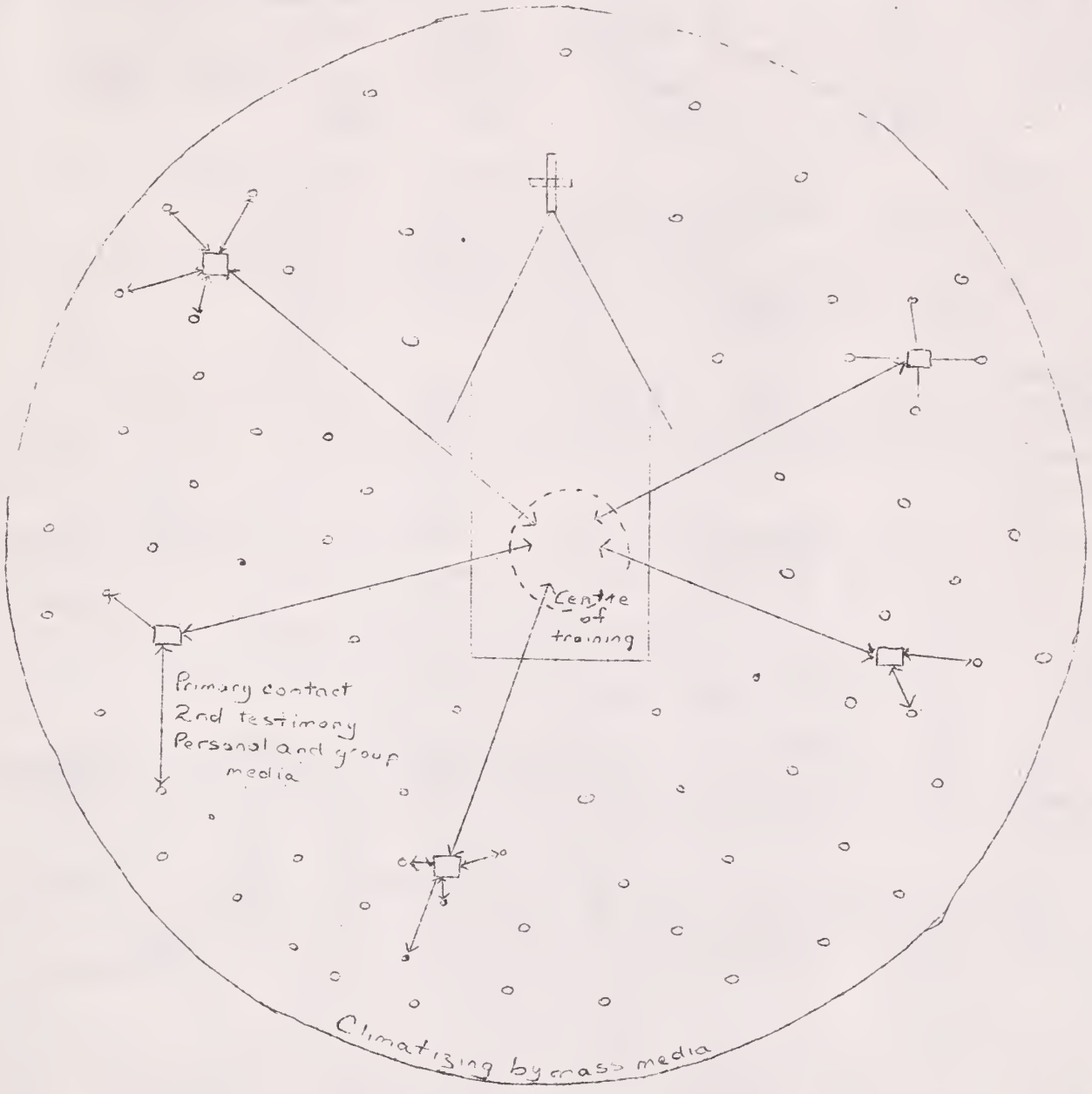
If at all possible evangelism must be centered in the local church and not in some outside organization. It is the present, visible church that is influencing the society in which it exists and functions, communicating itself and its message. The cutting edge of a church is where its members meet society, embodied in neighbours, friends, and family. It is at this level that the church must function and communicate itself and its message. If a church functions only when gathered together in the church building a few hours a week, it is difficult to conceive of it as a living body a living church.

Media tools, or channels are 'extensions of man'. They extend us, make us more useful. In the interpersonal situation where a Christian is playing a cassette for his non-Christian neighbour, it is the testimony of the Christian that is most important. The cassette merely extends and expands that testimony. So does radio in a wider sense, extend the testimony of the local church.

Modern mass-media require professional skills, but they also require church leaders who are skilled strategists so that media can be used wisely. Radio and television are for example good for the communication of information, for breaking down barriers of misunderstanding and then raising aspirations for change, but they are not good for decision-making.

It is extremely intersting to see how the church is rediscovering older and more local forms of communication such as puppets, arts and drama. Promising experiments are going on in India, Bali Thailand and other places. These are media that are inexpensive and which the ordinary church-member can use with ease. Alert church leaders will take notice of this and see how such tools can be used in effective evanglism.

EVANGELISM BY AND THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH



□ Christian o non Christian

D. HOW CAN COMMUNICATION BE ACHIEVED?

As we believe effective evangelism is possible, we cannot afford to let communic ation failures of the past continue or be repeated. We believe God is going to do great things but we must also realize that root causes blocking effective evangelism just have to be removed or overcome. Some of these have to do with willingness to change; others require dedicated research and planning.

The beginning point could be Phil. 2 3, 'Let each esteem others better than them selves'. The conductor of an orchestra is able to call in the various instruments as they are needed in the symphony. All instruments are controlled by the con ductor and thus they blend beautifully into a pleasant sound. In our Chrisitan

communication (and evangelism) we are often experiencing a situation in which the orchestra does not have one conductor only but each group of instruments, or may be even each instrument has its own conductor. How can we expect a pleasant harmony in the ears of the listener? The situation calls for humble submission to one another If strategy developments are done at local church level local situations will filter out many irrelevant methods and programs.

The serious question of credibility must be squarely faced by all involved in evangelism. Building credibility may actually be the most important aspect of an evangelistic campaign! If the communicator is not believable nobody will hear what he says. As the local church is the visible manifestation of the message, Christian radio programs will for example, be judged by what the listener sees in the nearby church.

Communications training will equip us to detect and remove other blocks but this training should not be given just to so called communicators. Communication courses should be made mandatory at Bible schools seminaries and schools of evangelism in order that church leaders can develop skills in planning effective strategies of evangelism.

Effective evangelism takes place on the premises of the recipient the place where he is in control. We do not like that we therefore invite him into our church (or buy time), where we are in control, . . but Jesus said Go out be involved in society, let them be in control and you evangelize them, communicate with them.

Case Study: Bangkok All Media Penetration Project (AMP)

AMP is a comprehensive program for Church Planting. It is realized that for a Thai to accept Christ and become an active church member, several steps are involved. AMP therefore seeks to meet a person at his present place in this decision process and then to lead him on towards the final goal of discipleship.

The aim of AMP is to confront every person in Bangkok with Jesus Christ as a living option. This will include awareness of who Jesus is as well as cognitive understanding of the message. Furthermore, AMP will seek to penetrate the culture of Bangkok with the Gospel in order to present Jesus Christ as a culturally acceptable option.

AMP will utilize all available media for a comprehensive program of evangelism and church building. In doing so AMP will follow modern principles of Christian communications strategy and as such become a pioneering and experimental project for urban media evangelism.

Addition to Engel scale:
Engel-Sapaan: cognitive measurement
Sapaan adds: acceptance/rejection scale

The objectives of AMP has been stated in five main points

1. Climatizing the City Prime media used will be mass media: television, radio and newspapers.

2. Confronting the Interested Again mass media techniques, but mainly concerts movies and other mass gatherings.

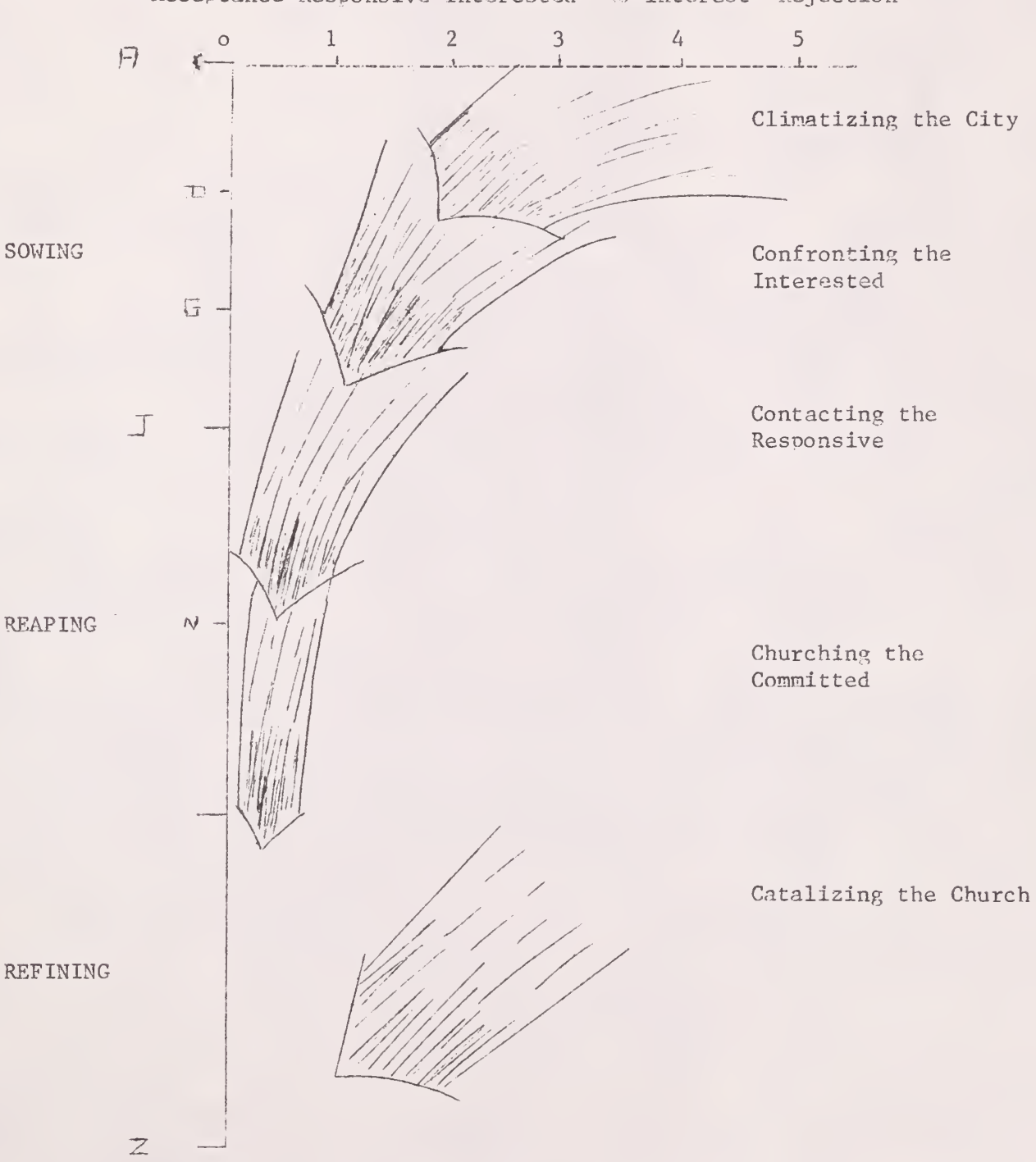
3. Contacting the Responsive This is totally decentralized based on outreach by local churches and Christians. Media used will be personal and group media such as films cassettes and literature.

4 Churching the Committed The immediate follow-up program aimed at making new

Christians church members. Media will be personal and group media as above

5. Catalizing the Church A variety of media will be used including training sessions. It is realized that the effectiveness of the project depends on the local Christians, so it is mandatory that they are trained and equipped to carry out vital aspects of the project. (This point will actually be started before other points)

The cognitive and affective processes desired are indicated on the Spiritual Decision Process Model below.



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Why People Don't Hear Us

Unrecognized barriers to evangelism

C. JOHN MILLER

Why is it that Christians have so many conflicting ideas on the "right" way to witness? And why is it that so many attempts to fulfill the Great Commission actually do more to impede it?

Some earnest evangelists seem to hurl the gospel at people without a thought for their humanity. You wonder if evangelism is their excuse for being cruel. Others seem more intent on winning religious arguments than on bringing others to a knowledge of the Son. Still others make the gospel so bland that their "converts" act as if it cost Jesus nothing, for they certainly don't intend to sacrifice for it themselves!

It seems strange, doesn't it, that evangelistic efforts are so often counter-productive? Surely such efforts spring at least partly from a desire to honor Christ. Yet the reason for their failure is simple: these evangelists have bypassed the biblical model for witness for one rooted in the foolishness of earthly wisdom. Making their own judgment about what a lost world needs to hear, they reject the counsel of the Holy Spirit of wisdom.

When Christ issued the Great Commission, it was his intention that his

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people fulfill it in a reliance on the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, Christians were intended to consciously depend on his direction as they preached the gospel. It was because of this that Christ told his disciples not to fear when they were brought before judges and magistrates: they could rely on the Spirit to speak through them with irresistible wisdom (Luke 21:12-15). This promise was dramatically fulfilled in the testimony of Stephen (Acts 6, 7), a man so "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" that his adversaries "could not resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke."

What sort of witness is it that the Holy Spirit produces? What kind of evangelism is "full of the Spirit and of wisdom?"

A witness controlled by the Spirit is controlled by Scripture's one overarching principle of wisdom: everything in evangelism must center on Christ and his cross. The Holy Spirit does not want us to use any methods that put the cross in the background; he does not want us to shape the content of our message so that the cross is obscured; he does not want us to substitute any wisdom of man for the wisdom of God centered in his work at the cross. For the preaching of the cross alone is "the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation" (I Cor. 1:24). It is at the cross that men come face to face with Christ, the wisdom of God in the flesh (I Cor. 1:30-31).

A single-minded commitment to the message of the cross is the key to effective witness. Not simply because it confronts the hearer with Christ, but because it confronts the speaker as well. Too often our witness is undermined by areas in our lives that have gone untouched by the transforming wisdom of God. We fail to lead others to Christ because we have resisted him ourselves. Our foolish, willful behavior becomes the focus and the stumbling block for men, and the problems frequently observed in evangelism are the result.

Before we can be effective evangelists, we need our own encounter with the active, powerful wisdom of God, who transforms the lives—and witness—of those who receive him. The need is most evident in four key areas that frequently undermine our witness:

1. *Emotional coldness.* Biblical wisdom teaches that our aim as evangelists must be to make our message clear. But must a clear witness be a cold one?

Consider how the wisdom of God is set forth in Scripture. There is an emotional quality to its logic. In the first chapter of Proverbs we encounter the persuasive character of divine wisdom. There is no cold, dead voice

here. Its arguments are the essence of rationality, but they have an emotional eloquence that speaks to the heart. Everywhere you turn—in the streets, in the gates, in the market place—heavenly wisdom cries its message in the most tender of tones: "How long, O you simple ones, will you love simplicity?" (Prov. 1:22).

The tender nearness of God also stands out in the great wisdom passage in Matthew 11. In the most intimate way, Jesus identifies himself as the holder of infinite wisdom, and invites men to embrace him as a receiving Lord. He says, "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Can you sense the warmth of this loving offer? That is the spirit in which to share Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to sensitize your heart to Christ's great deed of atonement so that your look, your tone, your actions and your joy will reflect such an awareness. Speak to others about Jesus just as God has spoken to you at Calvary. From him and his sacrifice we learn a new kind of love. It breaks down our coldness and replaces it with the compassion and love of Christ for the lost. Out of that love will come a warmth and courtesy that is a natural expression of the "Golden Rule" (Matt. 7:12).

2. *Man-centered strength.* The stumbling block of human strength also needs to be removed. The problem is that it is so much a part of us that we find it hard to detect. We share the gospel but somehow sense that the message did not get through. We may blame our hearers for their hard heartedness, but acknowledge as we grow more honest that the Spirit of wisdom did not anoint us with his power and presence.

"Expressions like 'born again' require careful explanation and should not be thrown at unbelievers in large doses."

Still, even that is not the whole problem. What has really undermined our witness is the fact that we have contradicted our message with our whole being. The gospel tells us of our need to abandon our strength to lay hold of the righteousness of another, yet in our preaching and sharing of it, we attempt to accomplish everything alone. Our attitude and bearing are often obvious contradictions to the content of our message. Those who listen to us can detect this contradiction.

The abandonment of our own strength is the mark of God-centered wisdom. In I Corinthians 1 and 2, Paul reminds us that just as Christ, the wisdom of God, was crucified in weakness, we in turn preach him in weakness to accomplish God's purposes. This weakness is not cowardly, powerless or effeminate. Rather, it is a total reliance on the Holy Spirit to stir up the gifts of the redeemed "new man" in Christ.

A closer look at I Corinthians 2 will make this clear. Paul announces in verse 2 that "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Christ is the sole content of his teaching; the crucified Lord is his only wisdom. And note the word "know." Paul has an experiential relationship to his own message of the most committed sort. He is part of his message, his life is a testimony to its truth. He is into the gospel all the way.

Paul goes further to define what this means: "I was with you in weakness and fear and in much trembling. And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:3-4). Paul yields himself to the Spirit's leading and to the power of the gospel to do the work.

For the theologically-trained person, an application of this principle must be to forsake trust in one's background and learning. For the person trained in evangelistic methods, the application is to shift trust from skills, gifts and past blessings to the present working of the Spirit through your weakness, relying on nothing but the message of the cross. Through prayer we can learn to do this in the most wonderful and practical way. True prayer is in its fundamental nature a simple resting on God and his power. And true preaching and true witnessing are but an extension of honest praying.

3. *Complicated reasoning.* Too often, would-be evangelists clutter the salvation message with elaborate intellectual proofs and arguments. Remember, the gospel is not simplistic, but it is simple. Evangelism and all Bible teaching which is circular and abstruse is to be avoided.

There is a compelling reason for preserving a single-minded concentration on the cross. In I Corinthians, Paul warns against a "wisdom of word" which is in conflict with the theology of the cross. Paul may well be referring to a specialized religious vocabulary which makes it hard to understand the gospel. But I think he was also alluding to the problem of "false Christs" in the minds of the Corinthians. They were developing a Christology with mythic overtones, conjuring up an image of Christ based on their own imaginations. In so doing they rejected the humbling message and the humble Savior of the cross.

Pseudo-Christs abound in our culture today. The closest parallel to such idolatry is probably found among the liberal and dialectical theologians. They have great trouble bringing together the "Jesus of history" and the "Christ of faith." The modern cultists come under the same condemnation. -The Judaizing Jehovah's Witnesses, for instance, have also rejected salvation by grace and thus have placed a veil between sinners and the Crucified One.

We should not overlook the sentimental Christ of popular religious culture either. Romanticized views of Jesus have been mass-produced through picture portraits, films, books, Sunday school literature and sermons. This sentimental figure lacks the manliness of Jesus' human

Unity in Diversity: Ethnotheological Sensitivity in Cross-Cultural Evangelism

LOUIS J. LUZBETAK, S.V.D.

Originally presented as an introduction for a visiting lectureship at Fuller Theological Seminary, this article illustrates why the author's writings are so valued by missiologists — well beyond his own tradition. And Professor Luzbetak has done for his Roman Catholic colleagues what Eugene Nida has accomplished in Protestant circles: sensitized a growing number of missionaries to the cultural dimensions of their mandated task. One key to this broad influence is found in the following article: his perceptive anthropological insights do not weaken his theological commitment, but rather inform and enhance it.

THE CHURCH is the Body of Christ, and as such it is to continue the work of salvation until the end of time. As members of this Body, however different our individual roles and situation in life may be, we all have the same major task to carry out — Christ's task: "to make disciples," "to witness," "to proclaim the Good News." In carrying out this task of being "other-Christs," we must be committed to unity as well as diversity. We must look at evangelism,[1] so to speak, with both our eyes, with our divine as well as human powers, with the aid of theology as well as anthropology and related sciences.

"Unity in diversity" makes sense precisely because we are speaking of evangelism. No matter what expression we may choose to describe the human dimensions of evangelism, we are, in the last analysis, speaking of communication, and generally of cross-cultural communication. We are not, of course, speaking of ordinary communication, for faith is essentially a free gift of God. Nevertheless, our role as communicators of the faith is subject to the ordinary laws of communication. To borrow St. Paul's words,

. . . for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But they will not ask his help unless they believe in him, and they will not believe in him unless they get a preacher, and they will never have a preacher unless one is sent . . . So faith comes from what is preached, and what is preached comes from the word of Christ (Romans 10:13-15).

Communicating the Good News and spreading the faith in Christ Jesus presupposes a "preacher". The preacher must be "heard", that is, he must speak in such a manner as to be understood. Despite its supernatural aspect and despite the inherent Power of the Word, evangelization presupposes effective "preaching" and "hearing". To preach in any other way, as implied in St. Paul's words, would be tantamount to not preaching at all.

We are speaking of human laws of communication, of effectively informing, convincing, and persuading. As Christians we are to inform, that is, we are to be like a lamp shedding its light throughout the darkness about us; we are to be a city built on a hilltop, visible witnesses recognizable as such. In fact, we are to do more than inform; we are to *move* others, that is, we are to convince and persuade: we are to do good so others might "see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven." Just as yeast penetrates and affects the whole mass of flour, and as "the salt of the earth" gives taste to an otherwise tasteless human existence, the Christian is to influence others by penetrating their minds and hearts and thus help them to change themselves according to the mind and heart of Christ (Matt. 5:13-16; 13:33). The communication of the Gospel, we are saying, although ultimately a divine task, is nevertheless governed by human laws of communication. Grace builds upon Nature, the psychological, sociological, and anthropological laws of communication.

Theological Understanding of "Unity in Diversity"

To take contemporary man where and as he is, in his great cultural variety, is precisely what God does when *He* communicates with man. When the inspired writers communicated God's message, they did so in *human* terms, in the language of the time and place. Although God's message was for all times and all places, it was spoken in terms of specific times and place, and must now be reinterpreted in terms of modern societies and cultures around the world (Headland 1974).[2] But never had God spoken more eloquently to us than through the

Incarnate Word, *the* Prophet. To communicate with man, God *became* Man, thus himself observing the basic law of human communication, indeed utilizing the wave-length of the recipient of His message.

> His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men . . . (Phil. 2:6-7)

That God believes in following human laws of communication in dealing with men is evident also from the fact that the God we know from the Bible has not become passive after biblical revelation was completed. On the contrary, as a God of history, He continues to speak to us in a variety of ways, through events, persons, and "the signs of the times," but always in *human* terms. God's presence in the world (both in the history of the Church as well as in the history of mankind at large) is not passive but active, very active. A personal note may be in place. Someone has placed a sign in the corridor in front of my office, which I greatly appreciated. It reads: "All I know of tomorrow is that Providence will rise before the sun." This reminder is appropriate not only, as in my case, for a college president dealing with his little world, but holds also for the big world around us and all of history. We do not know what history has in store for our age but we do know that Providence rose before our age began. God's grace accompanies and, in fact, precedes every new generation with all its unique, and not so unique, problems. God's grace precedes every missionary to his field of labor in distant corners of the world. God acts and speaks to us not so much through miraculous interventions but through events and human beings, always in terms understandable to man. He speaks to Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Hindus, pagans, and to all men, even atheists, in terms which they can understand. He speaks to men as they are and where they are, today, here and now, in the given society and generation.

The only way man is able to communicate is in the specific context of his actual cultural experience. He can know, love, and serve God and his fellowmen only in that limited context. Man views and is able to understand and interpret the world, and all that is beyond this world, only in the terms of his cultural or subcultural experience. Only in the case of the mystic and in extraordinary religious experience does man somehow bypass this law of communication. Cultures are therefore the medium

which the Holy Spirit normally uses in speaking to man, and, through the instrumentality of man, in directing events in the Church and in the world. The specific culture or subculture is the normal medium at man's disposal for responding concretely to God — the "language" that both the creature and Creator speak and understand best.

Unity

God is one in essence, and therefore his message must necessarily be one like Himself, always consistent with His nature — one for all ages and all nations. God cannot tell one nation to love and another to hate; one generation that He alone is God and another that there are many gods. The essential message must be one for all times and places. The Incarnate Word was and is "*the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life," (Jn. 14:6) yesterday, today, and for all ages (Heb. 13:8). He is the "Light" not for the Jewish people only but for the world (Jn. 9:5). Christianity is, therefore, in its very essence immutable. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Matt. 24:36). The Church, being the Body of Christ continuing in time, cannot compromise the Gospel, no, not "one dot" or "one little stroke" (Matt. 5:18) of it. To acquire the "treasure in the field" and the "pearl of great price" men of all times and cultures must sell *all* they have (Matt. 13:44-46), with no room for bargaining. In fact, so immutable and uncompromising is the Gospel that we must be ready to pluck out our eyes and cut off our right hand if they stand in the way of this essential unity (Matt. 5:29-30).

Diversity

There is, therefore, only one Christian core. But this Christian core has many expressions, just as a person's face, while remaining one and the same, may have many expressions. Unity does not demand uniformity. To the Church, both unity and diversity must be sacred. That is why we speak of unity *in* diversity. While there is only one essential Christian core, there are many Christianized cultures. There is only "one faith and one baptism" (Eph. 4:5) but many cultural expressions of that faith and baptism. This is the way God wants His People to be, one but diversified; after all, it was He Who made men born with a culture, in many ways the same but in many ways different, as individuals and as members of distinct social groups.

To put it in a slightly different way: the essential Christian core is the Church's plumbline, which it must use in building up Christian community; the local ways and values, here and now, are the Church's level. A builder must constantly apply both of these basic instruments. Unless he is scrupulously and constantly guided by both his plumbline (the essential core of Christianity) *and* his level (the culture here and now), he will end up with a construction terribly lopsided vertically or horizontally, or most likely lopsided in both directions. In the short space of four centuries, to mention a commonly recognized example, Buddhism became one of the major religions of China, but from the point of view of a Buddhist, one could hardly call Buddhism a success. Buddhism was indeed thoroughly indigenized: it became Chinese in character, but only at the cost of losing its essential unity. The Buddhist builders used their levels but failed to use their plumblines.

The same could be said of much of African Islamism and Latin American Christo-paganism. On the other hand, for centuries missionaries have used their plumblines in Asia, emphasizing and overemphasizing Christian unity (actually Western uniformity) but have forgotten to apply their cultural levels. A greater appreciation of Buddhist, Taoist, and Hindu thought and Mohammedan mysticism by missionaries of the past would have helped Christianity to acquire an Asian expression in Asia instead of its present Western look. The Church must at all times and places insist on unity and catholicity but at the same time should not only allow but encourage legitimate national aspirations and expressions.[3] As someone has put it: we have true presence of Christianity only if the community in question is 100% of the place, 100% of the times, and 100% Christian.

In speaking of unity in diversity we are struggling with a very basic and at the same time very difficult problem. What would *Jesus* teach today and how would He Himself behave if He were to be born a Japanese, Indonesian, a Los Angeles Chicano, or if He were a modern American teenager or college student? That is precisely our problem.

But lest we be misunderstood, when emphasizing cultural variability in the Church by no means do we wish to advocate a kind of particularism. The Church of Christ is both local and universal, very much like man himself.

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make only one body, so it is with Christ . . . God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you," nor can the head say to the foot, "I do not need you" (I Cor. 12:12-30).

Particularism is unchristian. Newer churches need the experience and previous growth of the older churches; the older churches need the openness, vitality, and spiritual enrichment of the younger churches. For the same reasons the younger generation in our own society needs the older generation; the older generation, in turn, can be greatly enriched and constantly rejuvenated by the younger. The Church is indeed both particular and universal, diversified and one, ancient and new.

The corresponding rule for the missionary in a distant land or the religious educator at home is fidelity to the Word of God *and* fidelity to the concrete culturological situation of the human community that is being evangelized — in a word, fidelity to God's nature as well as to man's.

Cultures vary not only horizontally, that is, geographically, but also vertically, in time. Without in any way compromising the immutable Christian core, the Church must adjust to the times as it must adjust to different parts of the world. The Church must constantly update itself, not just once and for all, but constantly. The task of every Christian must be to keep the Church "ever ancient and yet ever new." The Church must grow with culture. Just as the boy Jesus is said to have "increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk. 2:52), so the Body of Christ, the Church, must grow and be different today from what it was yesterday. Many of the complaints of our youth that organized religion has little meaning for them may well be justified. Religion, like culture, must be alive, dynamic. Like culture, the current expressions of our faith must grow, must become something new without ceasing to be what it was when Christ founded His Church.

In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that more change has taken place in the world in the last several decades than in the whole history of mankind. The Body of Christ, which is the Church, cannot simply stand by and bemoan the fact of change. Rather, the true Christian must be in the midst of this changing world. There is, of course, risk involved. As Toffler has so graphically

portrayed in his *Future Shock*, the world is changing so rapidly that man does not seem to be able to absorb the change. In fact, change threatens to destroy us (Toffler 1970; Wonderly 1973). Nevertheless, the Church must confidently face this storm and fearlessly plunge into it, for this is what Jesus would do if He were walking the earth today.

Today the cultural complexity of the world seems to be greater than ever. Our times may be the most dangerous period in the history of mankind, but to a true Christian they are also the most challenging of times. The Church must not forget what we have emphasized earlier that the God of history is active. He is not asleep. His Grace precedes our problems. For instance, never has an age been blessed with so much youthful dedication. With the growth of godlessness and devil worship we see the rise of even stronger movements, such as the Campus Crusaders, the Jesus People, and the charismatic movement in which the gloriously resurrected Christ and His Spirit become indeed central in the lives of countless individuals. Think of the new strength we have today in interfaith understanding and cooperation; think of the growing appreciation in some churches of the role of the laity, especially of women; think of all these providential developments and you have more than sufficient reason to be optimistic despite the threatening storms of our times. "Unity in diversity" means proper, and courageous adjustment to the times, *whatever* they be (Luzbetak 1969).

Anthropological Understanding of Unity in Diversity

The twofold fidelity to God's unity on the one hand and man's diversity on the other is by no means easy, and the resulting tension is great indeed. We are actually struggling with the basic problem with which Peter, James, and John struggled in Jerusalem in the year 49 A.D. (Acts 15:1-30; Gal. 2:1-10).

It is not my task to discuss what we personally may feel should or should not be regarded as immutable, constant, essential, absolute, or supracultural in Christianity, for this to a greater or lesser extent varies with our respective religious traditions. Our task is to discuss the variable *human* context, the local expressions of the Christian core, not the core as such. Our focus is on the variability arising from human differences in time and place. How does the anthropologist view the Christian challenge of unity in diversity? What does he understand when we say that

not only every society but every generation within that society must express the Christian core in its own "language"?

By "culture" we mean the set of socially-shared ideas that a given society (or, segment of it, in the case of subcultures) has for being a success in life and for solving human problems. Cultures are sets of answers for human needs at any given moment of time of any social group. "Culture" refers to the socially-shared solutions to the various human needs in the given physical, social, or ideational environment: needs that are biological, economic, social, psychological, aesthetic, scientific, spiritual — or whatever the human need may be. Some of the "solutions" offered in a given culture will be panhuman; some peculiar to a particular society or only to a particular segment of it. Some answers may be true, some false; some compatible with the core of Christianity, some not; some capable of enlightening and strengthening the Christian core, some tending to confuse or weaken it; some able to enrich the individual, some tending to demean him. Not everything in the Jewish culture was approved or tolerated by Jesus. He nevertheless was born a true Jew and could instantly be recognized as a Galilean, rejecting only what was incompatible with His divinity and His mission. The Church, as the Body of Christ continuing in time, must be incarnated into every age and culture.

There are three levels of culture, and as a rule of thumb evangelism must not interfere with or squelch anything on any of these levels unless, and only to the extent, that some aspect of the particular way of life is incompatible with the Christian core. Without entering into a lengthy discussion of these three levels, it would be helpful to review them at this point. Christ has not really been born into a culture unless somehow the essential Christian message is thoroughly integrated on all three levels.

Form

The first level to which we refer is what we might label as "culture content." Under "culture content" we include all the various *forms* that make up a culture, from the ordinary, commonplace ideas to the most sublime ones: how we should dispose of our garbage and tie our shoe lace; what we are to eat and how we are to prepare our food; how we are to relate to our mothers-in-law; how one gets married; how to fight and what to

die for; who is and who is not a good wife or husband; what is or is not beautiful; how to perform black magic and how to speak to God; and an infinite number of other answers to the what, when, where and how of coping with the various aspects of life.

Function

The second level refers to the *functions* of the various forms that make up the culture. The various elements of the culture content are related to one another through meanings, values, usages, presuppositions, prerequisites, connotations, reasons, repercussions, purposes, and other functional linkages. These and similar relationships bind the content of a culture into sub-systems, and these in turn into a system of solutions to human problems — into a more or less organic whole called "culture." The basic Christian core must, therefore, be more than a mere appendage to the culture whole; rather, it must be closely related to the other aspects of culture as a truly integral part of the cultural whole. We are "never (to) say or do anything except in the name of the Lord" (Col. 3:17). When the Incarnate Word became man, a Jew to be exact, he was literally indistinguishable from other Jews of the time, precisely because the Jewish lifeway was His lifeway, not only as far as the culture content was concerned but also as far as this culture content was organized into a system of meanings, values, usages, presuppositions, prerequisites, connotations, reasons, repercussions, purposes.

Underlying Philosophy

The third and deepest level of culture is the underlying set of premises, attitudes, and motives — the starting-points of reasoning, reaction, and persuasion — in a word, the underlying "philosophy," "mentality," the "psychology" behind the system we have just spoken about. The Incarnate Word adopted a genuinely Jewish mentality of his time to the extent that such a mentality was compatible with His divinity and His mission. Similarly, the Church of today, in making Christ live in our times, must not impose in matters that are not inconsistent with the essential Christian core of Christianity a mentality of any particular culture upon another — the Western mentality, for instance, in the case of African or Asian Christians, or a

mentality of the 1940's or 50's in the case of our teenagers or college students. In a word, the task of the Church is not so much to introduce a new "philosophy," "mentality," or "psychology" as it is to Christianize the *existing* third level of culture.

Summary

Why unity in diversity? Unity, because God is God; diversity because man is man.

Notes

1. "Evangelism" and "evangelization," as the terms will be used throughout the lectures, include not only evangelization in the strict sense *(kerygma)* but also post-evangelization *(catechesis)* and pre-evangelization.

2. See also Tippett 1973; and, for an easily readable treatment of the subject, especially Nida 1952 and 1960.

3. This was a basic and recurring theme in all recent major international Church gatherings. See, for instance, Abbott 1966 and Douglas 1974.

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How Shall They Hear?

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Using Communications In The Kingdom Of God

Section 1 -- Planning Strategies for Evangelism

Section 2 -- Basic Principles of Communication

USING COMMUNICATION IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Donald K. Smith

To change a world, politicians have the tools of public opinion and the power of privileges given and withheld; generals have the might of armies, disciplined men and unbelievably powerful weapons; administrators have systems with objectives, accountability and the flow of money and benefits. But what does the Christian have with which to change the world? Only a Message.

Whenever the Church has depended upon the tools of generals, politicians or administrators as their primary force the Church has slid into decay and even extinction in areas of the world. And whenever the Church has failed, for any reason, to give the Message truly and understandably the Church has been ignored in its obscurity. The Message is all we uniquely have; it is all we need to transform the world. But messages are for communicating, not keeping. Communication therefore, is the primary task to which we are called as servants of our Lord.

Strategies to complete the task of evangelisation must centre on how the Message of Jesus Christ can be effectively communicated. It is only in communicating the message that our task can be completed. Only by communication, with God and then man, can we expect to see men respond to His love.

In planning more effective communication, what are the most important questions to be asked, and the most important principles to be understood? Without argument, prayer is the fundamental principle of any part of God's work. Every question must be answered, and every principle utilised only as constantly bathed in prayer.

Beginning with prayer, where do we proceed in adequate planning of evangelism and discipling? Since communication is the basic task to perform, it is wise to begin by recognition of some basic principles of communication.

Communication is not a haphazard business, but follows distinct principles. There are not many of these principles, but an almost infinite variety of communication patterns are built around them. All communication situations revolve around these few principles.

What we need to understand about communications then, are the underlying principles of how understanding is shared between men. In evangelism, or in the working of an organization, understanding is the foundation of action.

Applying those principles in a specific situation is the next major challenge. With an infinite variety of patterns, which pattern is the best for which people and in which situation? How will understanding be achieved with this group?

Thoughtful questions are needed to guide us in applying broad principles to a particular group of people. In the first section following, then, some questions are given that can guide to a specific and fruitful strategy.

Next, some of the most fundamental principles of communication are summarised. The questions themselves will better be understood and used as guides, after the principles are understood at least partially.

S E C T I O N 1

PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR EVANGELISM

Guiding Questions

What are the most important questions to be answered as adequate planning for evangelism is undertaken? The focus must be on a specific group of people in answering these questions, or the resulting strategy will be scattered and ineffective.

Adequate answers also involve an understanding of the principles on which human communication (which includes evangelistic activities) depends. Each of the following groups of questions grows out of basic principles of communication; those principles are briefly explained in the following section, after the questions.

Some of the answers will be known because of experience with the group of people, but most of the questions must involve some kind of research - library, survey, or anthropological studies. When a programme is developed and implemented, evaluative research is needed to make alterations in the strategies and personnel involved as indicated. Even thorough preparation will not be completely adequate, and experience will indicate necessary changes. Evaluation will guide the on-going adaptations in evangelistic efforts.

1. Are the audience needs (felt, real and perceived) being considered in planning evangelisation in this group?

2. How would you describe this group of people in 50 to 100 words?
   What is your image of their spiritual attitudes?
   Their attitudes toward other peoples near to them?
   To you and other Gospel messengers?

3. What is the frame of reference for these people? i.e., what is the environment, physically and socially, within which they live?
   In what specific ways does that affect their perception of life, and their ability to perceive new ideas?

4. What planning can be done to use existing cultural patterns and world view as contact points for proclaiming the Gospel?
   What is known of change already occurring among the target group?
   How can those changes be utilised for presentation of the full Gospel message?

5. Has the Message to be given been succinctly summarised with all fundamental points included, yet with the emphases in teaching such that the target culture will quickly grasp the essentials?

6. How can the existing communication networks and social networks be used to evangelise and to teach the Church?
   Who, in the target group is open to change?
   Who are the pace-setters or opinion-leaders of the society?
   Who are the innovators, under what conditions?
   Describe the authority structure and the societal structure of these people?
   How many different "levels" or "classes" within the group must be reached to initiate a self-generating movement to Christ?

7. Are the communications resources of the receiving culture being fully utilised in the presentation of the Message?
Or is the message "adapted", reducing the presentation to the lowest common denominator in order to reach a wide audience?

8. What forms of media are already present and how can they be utilised?
What methods have been used thus far?
With what effect?
What communications materials are being prepared that will be suitable for each stage of change, conversion and re-adjustment of life-style and habits?

9. Are media tools being used as a substitute for close personal involvement of the evangelist with the group to be evangelised?
How can such involvement be furthered?

10. How many people are required to initiate communication of the Gospel within the culture of the target group?
What attitudes, and what skills need to be present in those people?

11. What systematic effort is planned for training and use of target group leadership in completing the evangelisation task?
How early after initial entry into the group will training begin?

Donald K. Smith
May, 1979

S E C T I O N 2

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

Principle 1. Communication is involvement.

Communication is a relationship. The symbols used express that relationship, at the same time deepening it. The inseparability of involvement and communication is also shown in several words that have developed from the same root word: common.

Communication	- sharing information and ideas
Commune	- living in a property - sharing relationship
Community	- having geography or interests in common
Communion	- showing deep friendship, and also intimate sharing in the life of Christ.

To separate an act of "communication" from a continuing involvement between equal participants, is to reduce communication to a babble of symbols. Without constantly increasing commonness in interests and experience, there cannot be an increase in understanding.

Principle 2. ~~Communication is a process~~.

A specific exchange of symbols, whether they be words, pictures, or actions, never stands by itself as an "act" of communication. Communications begin with a person's experiences, ~~and is utilized to meet present felt needs, which constantly change as situations and personalities change~~.

Communication cannot be treated as an isolated action, but is a process in which there is no clear beginning or ending. A people's history, an individual's experience and a dream of the future are all part of any single conversation or media message. To understand communication then it is necessary to understand the nature of man and the nature of God's reaching out to bring man back to Himself. Communication is the process that brings emotion and intelligence to human existence, even as blood brings life to the physical body.

Principle 3. Meaning cannot be transferred.

Meaning is something that is always personal and unique to each individual. Similar meanings may exist between different people, but precise meanings are developed within the framework of each person's experience. There is no way to directly transfer meaning from teacher to student, from employer to employee, or from the preacher to a congregation.

The person intending to send a message must concentrate on giving enough bits of information so that meaning can be constructed by another person. The receiver of a specific message assembles the bits in that message (plus his own related experiences) into a composite picture. If the experience of the sender and receiver are similar and if an adequate amount of information has been given, the meaning developed in the receiver's mind will be very close to the meaning in the sender's mind.

Thus, emphasis must be on the transfer of the right kind and quantity of information to enable meaning to be shared between sender and receiver. Meaning of course, is fundamental to the whole process of understanding.

Principle 4. Communication is what is heard, not only what is said.

One of the most familiar statements in any argument is, "Well, what I said was - " and the reply that is given, "Well, that's not what I heard!" Only together can male and female form life, and only when speaking and hearing are seen together as equal parts of communication can understanding be formed. Good communication requires the ability to hear as well as the ability to speak.

Good speaking is not simply a matter of pleasant words, but of words and symbols chosen so that the hearer will develop the intended meaning. The sender must be aware that many filters always stand between himself and the hearer - experience, culture, mood, personal needs, physical environment. Even with the best intentions and the greatest of care, the message heard will seldom be the same as the message spoken.

Principle 5. Mastery of content is the necessary foundation for effective communication.

You cannot tell someone else what you do not know yourself. It is of little value to learn technique, how to have good rapport with your audience, and the correct timing of your communication effort, if you have not learned thoroughly what it is you want to communicate.

A director cannot adequately direct unless he knows exactly what it is that he wants his employees to accomplish. Simply to say, "Do a good job", is not an adequate performance standard. It is necessary to say precisely what is to be achieved.

The preacher who exhorts people to love God, but does not tell them how that love can be expressed has probably not thought through the message that he is trying to give, Students quickly identify the teacher who ignores questions because he is afraid he can't answer them.

In every communication situation, the adequate communicator will know his material thoroughly enough so that he can change the order or style of presentation so that unexpected opportunities and questions can be used to ensure audience interest. One difference between a cassette player and a communicator is that the communicator can adapt to the responses of his audience, and that demands thorough knowledge of your content.

Principle 6. Purpose determines content.

There is always much more unsaid than can be said in any discussion. It is impossible to thoroughly cover any subject area no matter how carefully planned the communication or how long the time available. And rarely, if ever, is an unlimited amount of time available. Much more commonly, a very brief amount of time is available to transfer a large amount of available information.

Selection is therefore always necessary in communication. On what basis is such selection made? In every communication there is an implicit or explicit purpose; that purpose will determine what is selected from the whole body of information that could be used. If the purpose is not clear or not clearly stated, the information will appear to be a jumble of facts that do not relate to each other. Communication will inevitably fail. Questioning and further interaction may clarify the purpose, so that unrelated information can be dropped. Then, and thus communicator and receiver may reach understanding and communication succeed.

Principle 7. Communication increases commitment.

Commitment to a position, idea or a person is not static, but constantly increasing or diminishing. It is strengthened by stating that commitment publicly. When a person becomes publicly identified as in favour of something, the inward commitment of that person also increases.

Belief is primarily mental on the basis of information received and consideration of that information. Belief becomes more active, as it were, when it is talked about and the emotions become involved. The act of communicating strengthens commitment to the idea being shared with others.

Failure to be involved in communication about a new belief will lead to a weakening of that new position. The belief will be gradually eroded. Lacking emotional involvement the belief will become ineffective and may eventually be given up altogether.

Principle 8. A communicator almost always communicates with multiple audiences.

It is a common fiction to believe that a congregation is simply one audience, or that a radio listening group is a single audience. Every audience is, in fact, made up of a number of different groups with special interests. If the communicator is unaware of these differences, he will be unable to adequately shape the message to suit his audience. If he is only vaguely aware of different groups present, he may attempt to interest all of the groups and meet some of the needs of all of the people. The result may be that he interests no one and meets no one's needs adequately.

Even when the communicator has identified his primary target audience, he may be unconsciously pulled away from the prime target by the influence of secondary audiences present physically, or present by way of their influence. It is as if a steel arrow going straight to the target is caused to veer away from the target by powerful magnets on either side of the straight course. The influence may not be visible, but it is none the less very powerful.

Adequate communication strategy demands identification of the secondary audiences and their potential influence as well as the primary audience for any communication.

Principle 9. The communicator's image of the audience is a decisive factor in shaping the message.

We do not really communicate with reality, but with a shadowy image of reality. Even in face to face conversation, we may believe that we understand and know the person to whom we are talking, but it is to our idea of that person that we are communicating. We may never be able to know the true person, and so we really converse with what we think of that person.

With a large audience, it is very similar. We have an impression of the audience. We feel they are friendly, or hostile, or ready to listen to the news of Christ or perhaps ready to reject the message and the messenger. We shape the message, as we give it, according to what we think the audience is really like. When our idea of the audience is wrong, ineffective communication is the result.

Since the communicator's image of the audience is such an important factor, it is basic to effective communication to gain better understanding of the audience with whom we seek to communicate.

Principle 10. The audience's image of the communicator influences initial acceptability of the message.

There are two important parts to this principle:

(1) The importance of what the audience thinks of the communicator, and
(2) The initial reaction to the message brought by that communicator.

Even as the communicator's image of the audience shapes the way the message is presented, the audiences' image of the communicator shapes its reception. When the communicator is considered to be of high status and of considerable importance to the audience, then the message is more likely to be accepted. If there is little understanding between the audience and communicator, the message is likely to be rejected, initially.

Even if a message is rejected because of unacceptability of the messenger, or his relatively low status, the message itself may be remembered. At the outset, the message will probably not be acted upon, even if it is remembered. But over a period of time, if the message is a valid message that meets a need of the audience, it will be remembered and later acted upon. Thus, an important message brought by an unacceptable messenger may in fact later be remembered and accepted.

Principle 11. Messages are mediated by opinion leaders.

The audience is not a massive collection of individuals, but rather a series of networks within which individuals relate to each other. The effect of any message upon that audience is not simply the effect of the message on individuals. Message effect depends (among other things) upon its fitting into these networks. Within the network, the message will be shared, discussed and decision will be made. Each network is centered around an individual who is considered knowledgeable, or has prestige for other reasons that are important to members of the network. This person, the opinion leader, plays a key role in the acceptance, multiplication or rejection of the message. He acts as a filter for the message, without necessarily being conscious of this process. He hears the message, considers and discusses it with his friends, and comes to a decision, heavily influenced by the opinion leader's understanding of the message and his evaluation of it.

A communicator may start the process, but continuation occurs within the networks of individuals which frequently have overlapping members between groups. It is of primary importance to ensure that the opinion leaders understand and regard the message favourably.

Principle 12. All human communication occurs through the use of twelve signal systems.

Each of these systems is like a language, with specific vocabulary and relationships between the parts of the vocabulary, a grammar. It is necessary to learn the relationship between the individual signals as well as the meanings of the individual signals himself.

The 12 signal systems are:

Verbal	- the use of spoken words.
Written	- a written system expresses words and ideas that affect the spoken word without the limits of time or space.
Numeric	- numbers by themselves can be used to transfer information, formally in mathematics and less formally as symbols such as 3, 7, 666.
Pictorial	- pictures convey information, but the same picture will convey different information to audiences of different cultures.

Audio	- the use of sound. Music is a systematic use of sound, but also audio signals are used apart from music - whistles, tone of voice, bells, etc.
Kinetics	- body motion tells much about the messenger and the message, though the precise meaning of body varies between cultures.
Artifactual	- objects communicate, as people consciously and unconsciously use those objects in decorations, clothing styles, possessions displayed, even in architectural styles.
Optical	- light and colour communicate meaning at both conscious and unconscious levels.
Tactile	- we communicate by touch, holding hands, shaking hands, a hug or a kiss, or a blow in anger.
Temporal	- our concern for time will indicate much about us, and our attitude toward other people or the event we are attending. Lateness is not defined the same way in different cultures; even the units of time recognized differs.
Spatial	- the space immediately surrounding a person that is personal and private varies between peoples; how that space is used communicates information. Use of space in homes, offices and even in villages and cities communicates.
Olfactory	- Smell and taste, as in perfumes or food, tell much of attitude and intention.

These systems are inter-related, with one system very rarely used in isolation. Each culture has 12 languages in effect, that are used in combination to convey desired information.

Principle 13. Usage of the 12 signal systems is a function of culture, thus there is variation in usage of these systems between cultures.

Even as verbal language varies with culture, so do the specific meanings of other signals. For example, some cultures allow a very small area of private space around individuals and when talking together they stand perhaps 2 feet apart. Other cultures desire much more private space, and distance between people and a personal conversation may be 3 to 4 feet apart. Using the space system of the Culture A when you are talking to a person of the Culture B will give a very different meaning than that which is intended - the person from Culture A will appear to be aggressive and embarrassingly intimate.

Uses of the pictorial system vary between cultures; painting from East Asia are frequently vertical in their overall design, while Western paintings tend to be horizontally designed. Easterners will "read" the picture from the bottom up, while Westerners will read the picture from left to right. Cultures use different systems in pictorial signals; pictures are not therefore a universal language.

No universal language exists but each signal system differs from culture to culture in both interpretation and the kind of signals used.

Principle 14. Contradictions may occur between the signal systems used in the same culture causing perceived insincerity.

Some of the signals are unconsciously used, others consciously. Such systems as verbal or written are very consciously employed, while systems lower down in the list given in principle 12 are used in an automatic or largely unconscious way. Space, time and olfactory are examples of systems that are frequently used in such an unconscious manner in many

cultures. These systems are also received in rather an automatic fashion, but the message of the signals is nevertheless noted and is part of the total message received.

It is very possible to verbally state one position, but unconsciously reveal that you do not really believe that position by your use of space, time, or one of the other less consciously used systems. It is these silent clues that are used in judging character or the sincerity of an individual in a particular situation.

When people from one culture interact with people from another, the probability is that the "silent systems" will contradict the signals from the "loud systems". The result is distrust and accusations of hypocrisy. Effective communication is destroyed. Persons from Culture A may continue to use the silent system in the way with which they are familiar, since they give no particular thought to that usage. Persons from Culture B will also continue to interpret those systems in the way that they have always done. Thus, there may well be in the minds of Culture B a contradiction between what Culture A says verbally and what they say through the silent systems. The frequent result is that Culture B judges all of the people from Culture A as insincere and not to be trusted.

Principle 15. Communication effectiveness is normally improved by increasing the number of signal systems used for the same message.

When there is deliberate and carefully planned use of several signal systems simultaneously, then the impact of the message is increased dramatically. Typically, primary emphasis is given to the verbal or written systems. But effectiveness will be increased in a multiplicative fashion as other signal systems are utilised at the same time to communicate the same information.

Using several signal systems, in combination is similar to adding more pipes to a water system. The larger number of pipes carries more water. Similarly each added signal system increases the information load carried. Failure of one system to be understood does not mean total loss of communication since other signal systems are present and carrying the same (or related) information.

To achieve these results requires of course that the systems handle the same information and that hidden contradictions are avoided. Also, it is important that systems be used in a way that is already familiar to that culture and not in a way that is only familiar in another cultural setting.

Principle 16. The media can be a message.

Content of the message is obviously of great importance, but it does not make up the whole message that is given to a particular audience. The media used also conveys a definite message to the audience.

Identical words given to an audience by a preacher in a Sunday morning service, will appear to be a different message than when they are given over the radio, or written in a tract. In some cases, the media strengthen the impact of the message, but in other cases, the media may be so powerful in its own influence that the message is obscured and misunderstood. From the audience point of view, the media used inevitably alters the perceived content of the message.

Media alone is not the message, nor is the content by itself the message. Media plus content equals the full message received by an audience.

Principle 17. Mass media extend the range of a message by electronic and mechanical means, but inevitably distort the message.

The mass media are essentially multiplying devices. They cannot create a spiritual impact that does not exist within the original message or communicator. One hundred times zero, or ten thousand times zero, is still zero. But if there is an effective message or messenger to begin with, the mass media can multiply that impact.

But in the multiplication, certain parts of the message must inevitably be dropped. Mass media utilize fewer of the signal systems than do face to face interpersonal relationships. With the reduction in the signal systems, there is a reduction in the information conveyed and, thus, in the impact of the message.

There are hidden effects of the mass media as well. For example, the primary effect of mass media has repeatedly been shown to be re-inforcement of existing beliefs. Also mass media messages are normally regarded in an impersonal, uninvolved fashion. This hidden effect diminishes the impact of the Christian message, particularly in spiritual matters where involvement is essential. The marvels of mechanics and electronics may sometime powerfully assist the spread of the Gospel, but at other times they may be a severe hindrance to a true understanding and response to the message of Christ. There is no magic in the media.

Principle 18. Re-inforcement is the principle effect of the mass media in a stable society.

A popular image is of mass media as a powerful force changing unsuspecting peoples' ideas and ideals. The reality is quite different. Mass media are not a pervasive presence causing individuals in a widespread audience to carefully consider new thoughts and new messages. Instead, people normally select the media to which they pay attention to ensure that the media messages agree with their existing opinions and commitments. Messages that would force consideration of existing beliefs are either ignored re-interpreted so the message agrees with what they already think. Thus, the major effect of massive use of the media is simply reinforcement.

However there are certain conditions where this is not true. When a crisis confronts an individual or a society, they turn to the media to gain necessary information to handle that crisis. Also if a society is unstable and undergoing rapid change the media will be more extensively used. There are also times in any society when groups feel a need for re-inforcement of their beliefs especially when they are under pressure that would cause change. So media can be useful but primarily for reinforcement rather than conversion - except under special conditions.

Principle 19. Communication effectiveness normally decreases with increasing size of the audience.

The larger the total number within the audience, the greater the diversity of interests and cultural patterns existing within that audience. Communication effectiveness depends upon commonness between the sender and the receiver, but this diversity makes it very difficult to achieve commonness. It is easier for 2 people to share understandings than for 200 or 2,000. The more people involved, the smaller the overlap of interests is likely to be. The lowest common denominator may be found, but the area of communication is reduced to only that small area of commonness.

Principle 20. The mass media is only one of many influences operating on the listener.

Effectiveness of a mass media message is probably determined by other factors apart from the message itself, or the media carrying the message.

The mass media does not simply inject information into a passive group of listeners, who then respond to that information as the communicator desires. Group networks within the audience itself are actively sorting, selecting, and rejecting messages that come through the mass media.

An active audience is the first influence operating on the individual listener.

Some of the other factors that determine the effectiveness of the media, quite apart from the media itself, are the personality of the listeners; the frustrations (or lack of them) present in the audience; the way in which the message itself is organized; whether or not the media utilized fits naturally into the existing communication pattern in the society; how highly individuals receiving the message value their membership in their social group - and whether or not that group is in sympathy with the message; provision of ways for the audience to implement the action advocated by the media; what the audience thinks of the originator of the message, the activity of opinion leaders among the audience in accepting or rejecting the message; and the simple factor of allowing enough time for change to occur.

Adequate use of the media demands that it be used within the total context, and not as if it were acting in a setting where it is the lone influencing power.

Principle 21. Physical and social experiences of the communicators (senders and receivers) affect the form of effective communications.

A man born and bred by the sea, who earns his living as a fisherman, will not talk about the same thing as a nomadic desert dweller. Though the basic message may be the same, the way in which it is shaped must differ widely if comprehension is to be achieved. Even where the same word is used between different peoples, the experience behind that word varies widely. Water must mean very different things to a sailor, a farmer, a city dweller and an African living in the drought-stricken Sahel region.

But physical experience is only one of three areas of experience that affect the form of the communication. Social experience and personal or psychological experience are equally important. A person coming from a society that is group-oriented has a very different experience than the individual who comes from an individually-oriented society, where the individual is more important than the group.

The degree to which a society's infrastructure has been developed is a significant factor in communication. A society with widely developed schools, telecommunications, postal services and an active press and radio service provides a very different social experience than a society where newspaper readership is almost totally lacking, schools are limited, and communications are erratic. The kind and amount of communication methods present in a society obviously affects the form given to specific messages and the channels used for their dissemination.

Principle 22. Cultural patterns of a society fundamentally influence the form of a communication.

All ~~men~~ people have certain experiences in common, and certain basic needs. But the way in which those needs are met and the experiences are ~~made~~ integrated into their life, differs widely.

Each of these many different cultural patterns gives a unique opportunity for presentation of any message, and specifically for the message of Christ. Effective communication will build the form of the message from within the culture and its unique patterns, rather than seeking to find a lowest common denominator between cultures by adaptation of an existing message. Even though the content of the message is the same, the form of the message must alter sharply in each culture in order to have the maximum impact. Within the cultural pattern will be found the keys to the culture, or, as it has been termed, the redemptive analogies. These existing keys or analogies within a culture are often the witness that God has left to Himself. They can be used to give the fullness of the revelation in Christ. If these are ignored, and a message simply adapted from another culture, the opportunity that God has left is lost.

Principle 23. Existing beliefs and value systems determine reaction to a "change" message.

The reaction of the audience to new thought and a message calling them to change does not depend upon the communicator, but upon the audience itself. When that message directly challenges deeply held values, rejection or explosion are the two most likely results. It is essential to understand the core values of a society before presenting a life-transforming message, or unwittingly the communicator may cause a premature rejection of the message before the true contents of the message have been understood.

It is helpful to consider four levels of beliefs or values in every culture. The Peripheral Level is easily changed and no major confrontation is likely at this level when change suggestions are made. This level includes things like style of clothing, colours used, or the kind of house preferred.

The Authority Level depends upon a particular authority outside of the person himself for the strength of his beliefs. That authority may be a school teacher, the church minister, the village headman or the authority of a book such as the Koran. Beliefs and values at this level can be changed only when the authority followed is changed.

Then, moving deeper toward the heart of a person, lies the Personal Experience level of beliefs. These beliefs are not subject to reason primarily, nor do they rest upon what someone else has said or taught. They rely on one's own real and deep personal experience. That which is personally experienced leads to beliefs that are very persistent.

The deepest level of beliefs is called the Core Values, or the Basic Assumptions of a person or a society. Often the individual is unaware of these basic beliefs because they are prevalent around him and are not subject to question or challenge. In fact, challenge to these beliefs will cause a violent reaction in most cases. They are learned through the process of enculturation, that is, through the social group. They are maintained by group pressure especially from peers. Change at this level will occur primarily through the group on the basis of a new personal experience.

All change is not the same, nor does all change involve the same degree of difficulty. Change at the Peripheral and Authority levels, it is clear from this model, does not necessarily mean change at the personal experience level or at the very core of a person. A full response to the Gospel will cause change at the very core of a person, so profound a change that Christ called it the new birth.

Principle 24. Thought processes vary between cultural groups.

There are at least two major logic patterns in the world. One is the linear logic common in the Western technological world, where cause and effect are carefully related.

This linear logic is characterised by a pattern of statements followed by a conclusion based upon those statements. For example, a = b, and b = c; therefore, a = c. This linear logic has a long tradition in the West, dating at least from Aristotle. It is clearly represented in Scripture in the book of Romans. Those who are taught to use this logic system do not recognize any other form of logic as logical!

Contextual logic does not attempt to build a linear relationship of cause and effect, but seeks to examine the total setting of an event. Within that total context, clues are sought as to meaning and significance of an event, or to the causes of a particular happening. Visibly linked cause and effect relationships are not considered the only relevant information. All information that might possibly relate to the occurrence must be examined, since indirect links may exist that are not suspected by anyone.

An example from Scripture of the contextual approach is in the book of Hebrews, where the central theme of Christ's supremacy is examined. One viewpoint is presented then another and another without a direct relationship visible between successive viewpoints. But all viewpoints point to a single conclusion, Christ is supreme.

Principle 25. The structure of a society determines appropriate communication strategy.

Political structures, socio-economic patterns and communication networks must all be remembered as an appropriate strategy is developed for communicating Christ to any people. Political structures will not only determine the control of power but show how messages can be shaped and transmitted within the society. An open democratic society will require a very different approach from an hierarchial society structured in a feudal manner. Where decisions are made by group, it would be ineffective to appeal to individuals to make personal decisions, unless the message had been considered by the group first.

Almost every society is divided into social classes. Division may be based on economic factors, historical, religious or military factors. In many developing countries four sections are easily recognized - elite, modernizing, emergent and peasant or subsistence farmers. Each of these groups must be reached individually since they have different interests, frequently different values and different aspirations and needs. A message suited to one group will seldom be highly effective for another section of the same society.

Each society has a different kind of communication networks. In some cases they are based on interpersonal relationship, in other cases on marketing patterns or social occasions such as feasts. In each society, the prevalent communication network must be utilized to achieve effectiveness in distribution of the message.

Principle 26. Messages are assimilated within the listener's frame of reference, ~~which is derived from physical, social and mental experience~~.

Comprehension and internalisation of the communication are always within the receiver's experience, or frame of reference. That would seem obvious, but unconsciously communicators may assume that listeners "think the same way I do." It is natural to assume that other people have had similar experiences and are concerned about the same things as we are. So it is expected that the receiver will give messages the same importance and essentially the same interpretation as the communicator.

But there are always differences between the experience of the sender and the receiver. Sometimes those differences are very great. Thus, the differences in interpretation of the message will be equally great. How then can a communicator determine approximately

what meaning will be given to his message when it is received by an audience that differs from himself?

The communicator must learn the receiver's frame of reference. He must learn what physical, social and mental experiences are common among his intended audience. Only with this knowledge can he reasonably predict what meaning will be developed when his message is received. The emphasis in achieving effective communication must be on learning the audience's experiences and comprehension, rather than only on the communicator's ability to use techniques skillfully.

Principle 27. Psychological patterns of individual receivers determine message effect on that individual.

While general cultural patterns of an audience and their experiences can provide a broad profile of anticipated response, ultimately it is the individual that must hear and respond. His ability to perceive the message will depend on his personal needs and his emotional balance at the time the message is heard.

A message may be completely unperceived, even though it is apparently heard or seen, if that message has no apparent significance for the intended receiver. The sensory organs - eyes, feeling, taste and smell - may detect the signal, but the brain does not bring those to consciousness. They remain, in effect, unperceived. If every signal in the world surrounding us were consciously perceived, we would be reduced to a state of helplessness because of our inability to respond to each of them. The resulting confusion in our minds would cause psychological disintegration. This protective pattern also works to screen out messages that could be helpful, but seem to have no direct relevance in meeting felt needs.

Even when a message is perceived, it may be re-interpreted by the individual. When a new message is in disagreement with an existing belief or commitment, the message may be altered as it is received so that it agrees with previously held belief. This is an unconscious process in most cases; the receiver is not aware that he is actually altering the intent of the message. He only is aware that this new message supports his existing position! Thus, Christian teaching concerning angels may be used as support for belief in intervention of ancestral spirits in human affairs.

Similar reinterpretations underlie many heretical beliefs, and explain the ability among followers of some religions to "screen out" Biblical teaching.

Principle 28. All communication has simultaneously both rational and ~~emotional~~ "feelings" dimensions.

It is too easy to assume that communication is primarily rational. Therefore, the reasoning approach is the correct approach to use in giving any message to an audience. We feel there is something disturbing about using emotion in communication, something to be avoided because it is uncontrollable and faintly dishonorable. But in point of fact, the largest part of communication is emotion in nature.

In principle 23, we saw that there are 4 levels of belief. The outer levels of belief, peripheral and authority-based beliefs, are primarily rational in their origin. Information received can modify peripheral behaviour and can even cause a change in the authority level on which living patterns are based. Some emotion is involved in communication at this level, but it is not the major component.

On the other hand, when changes are sought at the deeper levels of beliefs, the level of personal experience or in core values, communication must be primarily emotional. Rational elements are present, but these levels are primarily emotional and will be changed slowly, and only with communication that has emotional content.

Principle 29. Individual change is achieved in relation to the relevant reference group for that individual.

Change does not take place in a vacuum. All individuals are related to groups of one kind or another; any change in the individual produces reaction in the group. If the reaction is negative and the person values group membership, the change may be forgotten or denied, in order to retain the support of the group.

Men is a social being. He finds his fullness, security and identity through interaction. He cares what his peers and other people he respects and depends on think of him. He feels secure when he holds views identical to those of his peers and other group members. To ask him to believe or behave contrary to other group members makes him insecure.

This principle is especially applicable in fundamental matters of values that lie at the core of a person. These values (which are the foundation for beliefs, attitude and behaviours in an individual) are based in the groups to which an individual belongs either by birth or by voluntary association. Therefore attempts to change beliefs and values must be concerned with the group, not only the individual.

The group can be the channel for change in the individual, or in other cases, the group must first be the target of change before the individual can be reached. The critics of people movements may overlook the significant point. That is, normally the group must change or be willing to change before the individual can be open to change himself. A people movement may prepare the way for individual conversations, and on other occasions individual conversions of key opinion leaders in a society may begin a people movement that in turn opens the door for others to follow Christ personally. Either way, the significance of the group must be remembered if an effective communication strategy is to be developed.

Principle 30. Decision to change is a result of combined effects of public or mass media and interpersonal networks.

The process of decision has essentially six stages:

(1) Awareness - of an alternative to the present behaviour or beliefs.
(2) Interest - in one or more of the alternatives.
(3) Evaluation - of the alternatives to see if one or the other is sufficiently attractive to make a change worthwhile.
(4) Choice - of which alternative to follow, or a choice to reject all of the available alternatives.
(5) Implementation - of the choice that is already mentally made. This is making visible by action a choice that is already been made internally.
(6) Readjustment - of behaviour patterns, friends, and even lifestyle that results from the decision that has been made.

These six steps have been expanded into a spiritual decision process that give more specific guidance in constructing a Christian communication strategy, in James Engel, Contemporary Christian Communication.

All communication approaches are not equally good at all six stages. Massive effort that is well executed may be almost totally wasted if it is trying to accomplish the wrong thing at the right time. In broad outline, the different kinds of media most influential at each stage are:

(1) Awareness - Mass media or public use of the media such as in mass meetings or church services.
(2) Interest - Mass or public media.
(3) Evaluation - Primarily interpersonal networks, discussion among friends.
(4) Choice - Again, interpersonal networks are most influential at the point of choice.
(5) Implementation - Mass media may guide in how to implement the decision and reinforce the choice already made, but interpersonal networks are essential in knowing what steps can be taken to implement the choice.
(6) Readjustment - The interpersonal networks are critical in giving group support to the individual making changes. The mass media may reinforce the change that is under way, but it is critical to provide fellowship - group support.

An adequate Christian communication strategy must use both interpersonal and media methods, supplementing one another, rather than in competition.

Principle 31. Perceived and actual feedback controls shaping of the message.

The communications process is not complete until the intended receiver has reacted to the message that has been sent. In interpersonal communication, the reaction is prompt and has immediate effect on the shaping of the message. That feedback may come more slowly in mass media, but it still has an important effect on the message. The communicator may expect certain feedback to his message, and shapes the message according to the feedback that he anticipates will come. In such cases he may well be wrong and the message will be incorrectly formed as a consequence.

It is obvious that obtaining accurate feedback for messages transmitted through the mass media is just as important as it is in interpersonal communication. But extra effort is involved in obtaining accurate feedback for mass media as compared to feedback resulting from interpersonal contacts.

Feedback is just as important as sending in the whole communication process. Equal attention should be paid to both parts of the process to ensure effective shaping of the message.

Donald K. Smith
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A child has feelings long before he can translate those feelings into concepts. He is educated by these feelings and it will be a long time before what is happening to him or her can be logically understood. The demonstration of God's love through human relationships in the family, the church and society is of great importance. To begin teaching about God's love and God's truth while living a life quite consistently unaffected by its transforming power is usually counter-productive as an effective Christian witness. It can be dangerous to understand and teach doctrine if the teacher has lost the feeling and insights and disciplines of Christian love. This is equally true in our attempts to reach across cultural boundaries with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Feelings usually come first. And then one is able to translate those feelings into beliefs and concepts at the rational level. Spiritual understanding moves from elementary insights and impressions to the more complex logical interpretations that grow out of the study of God's Word. If the feelings, insights and impressions have been too negative and hurtful, some people will not easily shake off these hurts, indignities and bad impressions received early on and be able to move on to a level of real communication with and understanding of God. Dogma without life insists upon its own way. Love insists upon the way of God and is centered in him in the whole communication process. We must be willing to stand with the other person, the "outsider" under the judgment of God's Spirit. This is basic in all of our witnessing.

It is important to remind ourselves that witnessing must not stop at the level of feeling and demonstration alone. But the Christian must constantly remember that mood precedes doctrine; and with this insight we should confront our world, whether it be the child growing up in our midst or the adult who is our neighbor.

There is another level of communication with the world that may even precede the step just mentioned. Outreach toward the other must begin at some place where the Christian and the "outsider" - or even the child in our midst - have a mutual field of understanding. We all know how quickly communication breaks down without this. Some of us have had the experience at some time or other of returning after many years'

absence to a high school or other class reunion. We enthusiastically greet a friend we knew well in school, but after the initial small talk and pleasantries we discover that we no longer share much in common. It is almost as though we no longer spoke the same language. Conversation slows down. The language is strange because experiences are different. This is one reason why those who witness "at random" are apt to find that their results are meager or superficial. We must re-establish areas of common ground and friendship and understanding for good communication to take place.

Sharing the Gospel is a tricky thing. We can so easily slip into self-gratification and one-way communication. Jesus Christ transforms by his power - not by ours. Each of us needs the experience of deep friendship. It is said that Carlyle and Chesterfield used to meet every week and do nothing but sit together in silence; when they parted, they thanked each other for a pleasant conversation. Whether by silence or words, understanding comes because in the presence of one another we have the feeling that there are satisfying results and the association ought to be continued and renewed. The Christian can easily be tempted to short-cut the task of establishing closeness, and substitute a bag of tricks, or an attitude of self-righteousness and high-pressure tactics. Some ways of witnessing may satisfy a need in the communicator but not in the one who is on the other end.

Outreach in Christian witness is best made on the basis of a friendly understanding of the "other" and respectful relationship with the person and his world. That doesn't mean total conformity to his world. Remember how Jesus in his last prayer prayed that the disciples might not be taken from the world, but remain it it (John, ch. 17)? Remaining in it, they were not to be "of" the world - or let it dominate them. The world can easily overcome the Christian, because he has a great deal at stake in it. We make our living in the world and we feel an urge to prove ourselves as acceptable members of the secular community. In attempting to live in faithfulness to Christian convictions we will run into many quandries and trying situations where one feels forced to conform to the

world, rather than to Christian convictions. But in spite of all these difficulties it is important to stay in the world.

To communicate effectively with the world of the "outsider" it is important to learn its language. This requires effort. It is quite possible, though, to go too far and adapt almost automatically to the mood we sense in the other. Notice how many people speak to children by framing words and sentences in the way the child speaks. My greatest frustration in learning Korean was to have Koreans speak to me using my incorrect forms, rather than leading me out of that to a higher plane. Sometimes when we speak to the sick we do so in a sober and morbid way. Most of us err on the side of conforming too much to moods. We almost instinctively adapt our language and manners to specific situations. Remember the language of faith that lies deepest in your heart, the language of friendship and love; of patience, kindness, long-suffering and mercy. And most of all, the language of integrity. The child needs the adult in us. The sick need our health. The weak need our strength.

Learning the language of the outsider is not the same thing as conforming to his or her world. Integration is more than a conformity to life-style or an attempt to imitate the other. You can do all that and lack integrity. Integrity and integration lies deep inside the person. It can often be seen in the eyes, the face, the attitudes, the words, the actions - no matter how awkward be the outer manifestations of conformity.

The most difficult challenge to Christian communicators today may not be the person who has never heard the name of Jesus or an effective proclamation of the Gospel, but rather those who have never seen anything unique in Christ but understand Christianity as just one of many relatively good religions or philosophies competing for the allegiance of the human mind and heart.

HUMAN ELEMENTS IN COMMUNICATING GOD"S TRUTH

Communication is a fundamental human characteristic. It is part of our heritage of creation in God's image, no matter how broken that image may be. It clearly distinguishes the human being from other living creatures. There is, of course, an endless variety of kinds of communication. Many of them are superficial and casual. Some are verbal, some are non-verbal. But we live in community and are dependent upon a series of ~~close and distant~~ relationships in the human family. Mutual contact is vital. In communication we seek ~~respectful~~ attention and encounter with others. We need each other for enjoyment, for support, for growth, for guidance, for understanding and for purposeful cooperative work and living. We were created by a loving God to live in loving relationship to him and with each other. We cherish that meeting from eye to eye and from heart to heart. The ideal encounter, however, is somewhat rare. When it does happen, it is a priceless experience. The relationships where the greatest possibilities for a deep and satisfying level of communication lie before us are those of friendship, of marriage and family, and of the community of believers in the body of Christ. But even there life is so often filled with failed, frustrated, or only partly successful communication. The Bible says we are at enmity with God and with each other. We are oriented inward toward satisfying self-will.

~~In this Biblical light~~ From this perspective it is understandable why communication between members of the human family is so often surrounded with mystery. We reach out toward each other, yet we do not truly reach each other. This dilemma is most clearly seen in those relations of deepest human contact. The life of a married couple ought to be a relationship of the greatest mutual love and respect and most fulfilling personal encounter. It should be a relationship of trust and joy and growing understanding. It is revealing that the Bible uses the word "know" for the deepest form of human communication, the ~~sexual~~ union of man and wife. The use of this word points up the essentially spiritual intent implied in this act of union. The point of the ultimate aloneness of either person is reached

and demands full respect and consideration for the sake of "right" communication. "Right" communication knows its limits and deeply respects the other person.

Why, then, is "right" communication so often distinguished by its failure? Let's turn our attention to some of the factors which cause short circuits in human encounter. When discussing the communication of Christian truth we must once again acknowledge that the good news of Jesus Christ is not mediated to us by human means apart from the agency of the Holy Spirit. John Calvin writes: "...We can never come to Christ unless we are drawn by the Spirit of God, so when we are drawn, we are raised both in mind and in heart above the reach of our own understanding. For illuminated by him, the soul receives, as it were, new eyes for the contemplation of heavenly mysteries, by the splendour of which it was before dazzled. And thus the human intellect, irradiated (or enlightened) by the light of the Holy Spirit, then begins to relish those things which pertain to the kingdom of God, for which before it had not the smallest taste."[1]

The theological factor is supreme in the communication of Christian truth. But the Holy Spirit of God does work through human agents. And so, this means that at the human level there are important secondary factors at work, also. Some are anthropological, some psychological, sociological, cultural and so on. At this level we need to exercise great wisdom and learn as much as we can about the human elements. ~~When calling these psychological, cultural and sociological factors secondary, it should be understood that they are secondary only because the fundamental theological factor is primary whether it is recognized or not and these other factors are disguised manifestations of the fundamental process.~~ In other words, the theological is first rank because it uncovers the hidden roots. But these other factors are not secondary in the ordinary realm of life. They are extremely prominent and demonstrable to everyone who has eyes to see and ears to hear. It is the universal level where people of different assumptions and convictions can

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[1]Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book III, Chapter II, p. 638.

meet each other and enter into discourse. It is legitimate to say that in many cases the tendency of Christian thinkers to jump too quickly to the basic theological reality behind the drama of human communication, coupled with a negation of the importance of these secondary factors, is a damaging simplification and a cause of complete breakdown of communication between Christian thinkers and the world.

I like the word "communication" rather than "approach" when talking about Christian contact with those outside the Church. We sometimes speak of the "approach" to Hinduism, to Buddhism, to Islam, to Marxism, to secular humanism or whatever. "Approach" carries implications of an attitude which some might call haughty. The idea comes to mind of a one-way communication or an insensitive confrontation. A kind of banging someone over the head with truth.

"Communication", on the other hand, implies being, at least in part, in solidarity with the life of another, not over against. And attitudes are an extremely important element in the process of communication. That is true regardless of the kind of message to be conveyed. Attitudes speak loud and strong. Jesus demonstrated genuine respect and love to perfection. He spoke with courtesy and grace though never at the expense of truth. Unloving attitudes can be significant barriers in achieving mind to mind and heart to heart communication.

"Communication" is a subject that interests people. Our societies, institutions, families and individuals have serious problems with satisfactory dialogue. The transfer of ideas and influencing of wills is often accomplished, if at all, at great expense to mutual understanding. Often through high-handed manipulation + brute force. Distortion and breakdown is an enormous problem. Human society is plagued by communication breakdown. Discourse, whether among nations or between employer-employee, between a husband and wife, between parent and child or ~~whatever~~ any other relationship, is often the discourse of deaf mutes even though words are very much a part of the breakdown.

The usual responses to the misunderstandings are retreat and isolation, anger and frustration, or an attempt to dominate, control and

manipulate the other. Resentment and self-justification are its fruits. Self-justification usually solidifies the breakdown.

Language is the chief, but not the only instrument of communication. Language is of crucial importance to the Church because of its commission "to preach the Word". The "Word" is one of the key concepts in the Bible. God creates the world by the power of his "Word". This is a profound expression of the nature of reality. Every act of creation in Genesis I is introduced, "And God said", or "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made." Or in Psalm 33: 6-9 we read, "He spoke and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Or turn to Hebrews 11:3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." This is not explained by calling it poetic phraseology. It cuts to the heart of reality. Its deepest foundation is found in the opening words of John's Gospel where God's supreme act of revelation, Jesus Christ, is called the divine "Word". This same message runs through the entire New Testament and reaches back into passages in Proverbs and Job concerning divine wisdom.[2]

In the Bible language means dialogue. There is dialogue within the divine Trinity. There is dialogue between God and the man and the woman. And there is dialogue between human beings. If the divine-human dialogue is broken and disturbed, the dialogue at the human level is also in disorder. In other words, language, that marvelous sign of mankind's nobility and mankind's stamp of origin becomes a distortion full of inner contradictions.

The Bible expresses this important fact in the famous tale of the confusion of languages and the Tower of Babel. This tale of Genesis 11, told in vivid style, is not just a naive story. It is not a ridiculous story. It is not just an impressive story. It is one of the basic and universal documents of the mysterious drama of humankind. It is one of the representative pronouncements on the human situation. It revolves

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[2]Job:12:12; 12:13; 28:12; 28:18. and Prov. 2:6; 4:7; 8:11 9:10; 16:22.

around Genesis 11:1. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech"; and verse 7: "Let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." This story follows in direct sequence to Genesis, chapters 1 and 3 which tell about the unbroken dialogue as the main feature of "normal" human existence; and the broken dialogue (between God and man, and between members of the human family) as the crux of humankind's actual existence, after sin and its penalty entered the picture. God's verdict and judgment on the human scene is contained in the words: "Let us go down, and confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."[3]

But, while this is part of the penalty and consequence of sin, there is also hope. The Bible ~~also~~ makes that abundantly clear. Our God is a missionary God. He is a God of hope and of re-creation. He has a desire and a plan to restore us to our "normal" existence. The indispensable Biblical balance to Genesis, chapter 11 is Acts, chapter 2. In this passage the condition of language in human life appears to be of primary significance, because when the full power of the Holy Spirit reigns and the divine-human dialogue is restored, the confusion of languages begins to disappear and the way opens to unfrustrated communication again. Fall and redemption, Babel and Pentecost are the hidden factors behind language and communication. The story of Acts, chapter 2, indicates with Biblical realism the fact that humankind, since Pentecost, remains suspended between fall and redemption, between Babel and Pentecost. We live now disoriented. But in this second chapter of Acts the world of true reality beyond physical appearances breaks through.

Can we say, then, that language exists for communication? Verbal communication often has the character of a combat and not of a spontaneous meeting of minds. Language expression needs the other and yet can destroy the other. The art of listening is as important a part of real communication as is speaking. ~~Why is it that true listening is practiced~~

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[3]Genesis 11:7

Sometimes "communication between" people
by so few? And why is it that so often dialogues are really only
monologues with closed ears and hearts? — one-way communication.

We could give many examples to point out how speech is a very imperfect means of expression. The mystics, who practice flight away from community have always exalted the absence of speech as the highest form of communication. In this belief there is a grain of truth, but when carried to an extreme it is a disastrous deviation because it is ~~the~~ a denial of the basic significance of community in the human structure.

Many more observations could be made regarding the dual character of language in communication. The act of communication can mean, as already has been said, a combat, or it can be the means of genuine mutual understanding in a healthy and wholesome encounter. It is a complex affair.

This complexity becomes still more conspicuous when we take into consideration communication not only between individuals but between socially and culturally different groups. Again this is demonstrated in the use of language. The various languages are means of expression for different nations and peoples, each with its own unique history and psychology, and a response to life which is characteristic of its special type. This is reflected in the language. In a very strong sense this holds true for the cultural differences, because different cultures have distinct attitudes toward life. There is great variation in spirit and orientation. Cultural and social differences make it very difficult to find a common language which is understandable to both sides. For communication, it is essential to understand the language of the other, and what is more, to learn to use it. But knowing and understanding the presuppositions and assumptions which are behind the language, thus assuring a common universe of discourse, is just as essential as knowing the language, itself. In fact, both are a part of successful communication. On these presuppositions and assumptions behind the use of any language hang the spontaneous reactions to the totality of life. That is why short-term missions poses a problem.

Important as language is, however, one should not forget that there are many forms and means of "communication of" and "communication between". Like language and sometimes even better than language or speech, these other forms of communication create a world of meanings.

Although the proclamation of the "Word" in the Protestant tradition of preaching, as one of the most essential elements of worship, will always remain necessary, we Protestants must not neglect all other means of "communication between" and "communication of" in a too-exclusive dependence upon speech or preaching. It is a fortunate thing that often the world forces the Church to re-think its positions. The world is largely illiterate in matters ~~of the Christian religion~~ relating to the Kingdom of God. Because of this, there is a great urgency ~~for evangelism, which~~ to proclaim & demonstrate the coming Kingdom leads to the discovery and use of forms of communication other than speech. The Bible, in spite of its impressive emphasis on the Word, does appear, on closer inspection, to recognize many forms of expression and communication as natural gifts of men and women, other than speech. Perhaps even more than the Churches are. Even in the "Western" world, an overwhelmingly verbal culture, there seems to be a silent revolution going on among millions of people who prefer "seeing" to "hearing" or "reading". It is significant to note that in Indo-Germanic languages the words "see" and "know" go back to the same root. and truth is to be done as well as spoken. We come back to the importance of integrity.

Perhaps because of the highly rational and mechanical-technical nature of much of modern life, many of the forms of communication that were active in former periods of our culture have atrophied. One area that should perhaps be re-emphasized is that of symbolism. Symbols are material things or representations that point beyond themselves to a world of higher values and realities. They are not themselves that reality but only point to it.

A large part of the time of many people is filled by the modern technical means of information and propaganda: television, radio, and theater. These are the media through which they receive the impressions which mold their thinking. The term "mass communication" is, in a way misleading because genuine communication is always "personal". There are

cases in which mass communication becomes personal but in many cases a great deal of what is produced by these media is propaganda. These media have enormous demonic potentialities as well as potentialities for great good. What we need is not a rejection of the media but a critical use of them. We need to build up our own Christian criteria and style in making use of them. And we need to struggle against their demonic, culture-destroying tendencies. The Church owes as one of its services to the world, to this sector of modern life, the producing of men and women who find ways of being the conscience of the world.

COMMUNICATION FROM A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

We have in the Book of Genesis a wonderful picture of created man and woman before the fall. They walked with God. They spoke with Him. They were unembarrassed at being totally transparent. They were without sin, without guilt and without penalty. Their environment was lovely + not hostile - and they knew freedom and fulfilment. They knew security and satisfaction and open communication. It was life abundant. But then something happened. Disobedience entered the picture and one of the biggest penalties of it is the cloud which now obscures the face of God and the voice of God. God's presence and his spoken word are a dim and haunting memory to the human family as a whole.

From that time of ex-communication from God's immediate presence the great human tragedy has been disorientation. We no longer hear his voice in the stillness of the Garden. We no longer meet him face to face. We lost our true bearings. We lost our true freedom and fell into bondage to self-orientation. The Biblical record makes it clear that God created us men and women in his image and likeness for fellowship with himself and with each other. It isn't just that we lost God. He lost us, too. And it hurts him deeply. He is more alone now.

The entire Biblical record from beginning to end is the story of God's costly plan to restore his beloved but rebellious sons and daughters to his home where he lives. In his Kingdom there is life and peace and freedom and joy. But our tragedy is the wasteland of our isolation. God loves us. But we do not hear him and we do not respond to his voice. Our orientation is inward now. Toward self.

So here we are spinning around false hopes. Our situation is very serious because we are removed from the source and sustainer of life. We are strangers now to the covenants of promise and according to the Biblical record, without hope and without God. (Eph. 2:12)

A friend of ours wrote a book, "Let My Heart Be Broken With Those Things Which Break the Heart of God". God's heart is broken over our disobedience and isolation. We are living in a wasteland with a kind of amnesia about our Father's house. There is a great lonliness in our lives. We look inward and there is the stamp of God's image but we don't even recognize it — or see it as meaningless. God's dwelling place is off our map. There is a great gulf fixed and we cannot bridge it. We know it must be somewhere out there, but the longer we live without him the more convinced we become that He doesn't exist and that this world is all there is.

At the risk of becoming trivial, let me ask - what would you do if you were God and faced his communication problem?

When I was a student here many years ago there was a woman student at Princeton Seminary who had worked for the Wycliffe Bible Translators in South America. She had volunteered for an assignment in a remote, isolated interior village of Peru. The people there one could only describe as being in a pre-civilization culture. The purpose of going in there was, of course, to begin learning the language so that it might eventually be reduced to writing and the Scriptures translated into it. Several men previously sent in had been killed by this tribe - presumably out of fear of the strangers. Finally, the Wycliffe people decided to ask for volunteers among some of their women, thinking perhaps a foreign woman wouldn't be harmed. So, my friend had volunteered. In telling me of her experience she made it clear how careful she was to try to relieve their fears. She lived quite openly among them. She participated as much as possible in their style and patterns of life and tried to make friends. But gaining their trust was slow and painful and full of anxious times.

They were so isolated. Their entire world view consisted of their own village with one village up the river and one village down the river. That was the whole of reality to them. Finally, after several weeks and even months of living there she began by friendly smiles and little victories to gain the trust of one village woman, in particular. This woman was helping her learn the names ~~for~~ of things and they were beginning

to share other village life experiences. Ex-communication was moving more toward communication between them.

One morning they were down by the river, side by side, washing their clothes when this village woman asked her new friend a hard question. It was simple, but hard to answer. The question was, "Where did you come from?" Why was that so hard? Because my friend had come from a place far beyond the village woman's map of reality. But to tell her the truth would be hard for her to accept. It was beyond her world and she probably wouldn't believe it. How could my friend retain this woman's trust and still tell the truth?

She prayed that the Lord would help her to answer this new friend in a way that would be true but would not cause her to choke on the truth. So, she said, "I came from one village up the river - and then some". After a long, thoughtful silence, the woman showed that she was able to accept that answer.

This personal experience of a friend made more clear to me the nature of the problem of communication which God faces with us.

We have the theological problem. Human beings have been banished through sin from the household of God. There is a great gulf between our view of reality and God's real world. And then we have cultural barriers in this world where we live.

Ever since the sad time when man and woman were removed from God's direct presence He has been trying to reach us and restore us. He wants our vision of reality transformed and he wants our center of gravity re-formed around himself. He wants us to hum with life in response to his master chords. Look at the book of Hebrews, chapter 1, verses 1 and 2: "When in former times God spoke to our forefathers, he spoke in fragmentary and varied fashion through the prophets. But in this the final age he has spoken to us in the Son".

You may be thinking, "How is the challenge of communication any different from the challenge of evangelism?" The word "communication" puts the problem in a wider and deeper setting because in "communication" two parts are brought together. Both are of vital importance. One we might call "communication of". The other, "communication between".

1. When we are talking about reaching people with God's truth we speak about the communication of the good news of God's transforming grace in Jesus Christ. This, by its very nature, acknowledges that there is truth - ultimate truth - which has its source in God. Our concern is to know what this truth is and make it known effectively and with impact in a world that seems to be separated by a deep gulf from the thought, language and true nature of the church. What are the possibilities of bridge-building? Is the world today so far separated from the range of the Kingdom of God that no bridge can be built? There is a lot of room for thought on the question of human wisdom and the power of the Holy Spirit of God in accomplishing this "communication of" divine truth.

2. But we sometimes forget another very important factor in the communication of God's Word. It is not done in a vacuum. It is done in a human context. And we human beings live in societies. Very different human societies. We often refer to them as cultures. God's Word is above all these cultures and judges all these cultures and is understood in some aspects a little differently in all these cultures. But it does not come straight down from God to each one separately - even if the Bible is the only medium of expression. Because the Bible uses human language and concepts to express God's truth, just as Jesus, God's Son put on human flesh to reveal to us his Father. Transferring the message of Biblical truth from culture to culture is communication between. We often call it "cross-cultural communication".

So, "communication of" and "communication between" must be distinguished and yet at the same time be kept together. God wants a new creation. He wants to make us new creatures in Christ. Unity in Christ and comm-unity with one another in the body of Christ. Christian communication has a high purpose.

It is because of the interrelation between the two aspects of communication that we begin by looking at communication in a Biblical light. However, a word of warning is in order. We will not find ready-made answers in the Bible to the "how" questions of communication. But communication is the fundamental human fact. It is the mark of our humanity and yet it has been more conspicuous by its failure than by its success in the history of human life. The understanding of man and of woman and of God which we have in the Biblical record is the cornerstone of the task of communication.

In the Bible is laid out before us the history of God's risky adventure with Adam and Eve and their descendants. That includes us all. The Biblical record reveals God's intention and purpose in creation. Without it, men and women are mysteries to themselves. They do not know from whence they came or where they are going. And they do not know why they are here in this world at all. There are all kinds of attempts to stab at the answers to these questions and human societies offer a variety of answers to people. When we get to the question of culture we'll go into this matter more fully.

But the human being is a mystery to himself. And no wonder. He cannot be understood in himself alone, but only in relationship to God, his maker. And now that he lives in isolation, the landscape of reality is all but blotted out. But God is a God who speaks. He is a communicating God. He has spoken and revealed himself. And he has given us the power to speak. This is one way in which we are created in his image.

The Biblical record makes it clear that God alone really knows man and woman. He alone knows our inner motives and our being. It is, therefore, true that knowledge of self goes through the knowledge of God and not the other way around. It is said of Jesus Christ that he knew what is in man (John 2:25). Psalm 139 insists upon this fundamental starting point. "Oh Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." In the Old Testament prophetic writings more than once the expression recurs that God

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alone knows and tries the reins and the heart of man (Jer. 11:20). All these and similar statements are spoken out of the situation in which men and women both know and yet do not really know themselves. We also both know and yet really do not know the other person. The fundamental vision of the Bible is that God, being the real source of our being, has created us for communication or dialogue with himself. This being our character, we are also created for communication with each other. This is authentic humanity.

The God of the Bible is the God who speaks. He creates and commands and wants to live in personal relationship with us whom he has created. He invites us back into that personal relationship as the fulfillment of human existence. In the words of Hebrews 1: 1-3 the record of the communication of God with us is explained. God's missionary intention shows up as a continued discourse. This divine urge toward human beings is summed up beautifully in the name "Immanuel". This name given to Jesus Christ means "God with us". It is the "Word" - or "communication" made flesh.

This immediate, personal relationship or "communication" of God with men and women as the foundation of true life, finds a striking expression in another aspect of the phraseology peculiar to the Bible. Combined with the impression of a deep awe of God's majesty, holiness and greatness, there is also on both sides, divine and human, a deep intimacy of tone and relation. You are <u>my</u> people, I am <u>your</u> God. The close personal nature of God's communication with humanity and of the communication between people on the human level is, in the Old Testament, an expression of the human response in love to God's speaking. This response in love is the only adequate expression of full communication. It is the only adequate response of man and woman to the loving initiative of God. A response based upon wholehearted acceptance of founding our life on the dialogue with God. Love is a mutual transparency and responsiveness in which true communication comes to full flower. This is what the Bible has to say, in sum, about communication as the fundamental fact between human beings with each other and between human beings and their God.

In the Bible the concepts of the covenant, the people, the church as the "koinonia" of the believers with Christ, and in him with each other, are so central. God wants a people whose hearts are bound together in him. Christ prays for a church in which the members are one in the Father and in him. The community of Israel has its calling in the divine covenant. This community of Israel is not established in its biological, cultural or even social unity. The sacral unity is an expression of the community established by God. God called the people of Israel to be the instrument of his redemptive will and purpose in regard to the whole of humankind. Israel is called a "holy people". The two classical passages are Ex 19: 4-6 and Deuteronomy 7: 6-12. What has this to do with the subject? According to the Biblical view one can know God and full life only in community. The "I" and the "you" are both founded in God's will and life-giving power. Therefore, both are responsible to God and to each other. We are related to him and to each other. This is unthinkable without communication as the law of human nature. When our Lord is asked by his disciples to teach them to pray, he tells them to say, "Our Father, give us... forgive us, lead us, deliver us. God is not the father of isolated individuals, but of a people, the people of his Kingdom. And in the final fulfilment of that Kingdom, communication will be perfect.

This is essentially what the Bible has to say about communication as a general and fundamental human fact. But the other half is that communication, which is so essential to human life and to human nature, seldom succeeds and often fails. Can we overcome it by a great effort to understand each other? The Biblical answer is along this line: We are created in the image of God. That image has been broken and distorted but not erased. We are ex-communicated because of disobedience. Our ability to communicate is firmly rooted in a right relationship to God, our maker, judge and redeemer. The breakdown and distortion of communication with its dangerous and delicate place in human life is a consequence of the distortion of this first relationship. The fact that our human condition is not normal, but abnormal, in a broken relationship with God, is the source of a corruption which carries over into all relationships. All our patterns of communication are affected. Defectiveness in communication is a sign as well as a consequence of the distortion of the God's creative

will. The breakdown of real communication in human life which characterizes our personal and social relations is the result of a primordial break of communication with God in whom we nevertheless live and move and have our being. Human life if full of anxiety, fear and frustration, as a result. The entire history of humankind is a religious drama. The fundamental fact is described in Genesis, chapter 3. The man and the woman know they have betrayed their trust and hide from God's presence. They feel their guilt. Immediately all relationships are affected and in disorder. The play of self-justification lifts its head. The series of accusations begins, one against the other. Even God is accused by the man: Not I, Lord, "the woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." And the woman showed no greater virtue. The deepest of human relationships, that between husband and wife is threatened. Labor, which is intended as a blessing, being a partnership with God in creative activity, gets the stamp of a curse. And then Cain kills his brother, Abel, and gives the tragic answer remembered through all the ages when God calls him to account with regard to his brother: "I know not where he is. Am I my brother's keeper?" In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus answers the inquiring lawyer: "Don't ask who is my neighbor. Know that you are always the neighbor to the other."

Language which is the mark of our humanity and the symbol of unity and communication among human beings often becomes the source of misunderstanding, accusation, deceit and disruption. In human life language assumes the ambiguous role, both of understanding and of misunderstanding. Language can be used to bless and to curse. Every person and all human relationships in every sphere of life suffer under this ambiguity - and yet exploit it. The self-contradictory state in which the human urge for communication shows itself has its origin in the broken trust between the man and the woman and God.

Now, just as "communication of" God's salvation history requires God's initiative and our response, so our "communication between" on the human level requires the gracious action of God and our appropriate response. In Christ our restoration and healing centers. The inward

nature of our focus begins to shift when the chemistry of his love begins its transforming work. Now there is the lively hope of healthy, respectful, loving, courteous, enjoyable communication with God and with each other as we bigin to see others with God's insight.

This is one of the deep meanings of the church. It is to be the center of God's activity of re-creation because its function is to be the true community - the embodiment of renewed humanity.

The Bible is consistent in presenting God first as the origin and establishment of true relationships between himself and humankind and among members of the human family. He is also revealed as the one who takes the initiative in restoring the broken communication. "The Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, ...and I hid myself." In these two expressions - "Where art thou"? and "I hid myself" - the dialectic in the communication between God and human beings is fully contained. In theological terms this means that although men and women still hear the voice of God ("I heard thy voice in the garden"), we flee from him, and therefore the Bible does not describe the religious history of mankind as a search for God, but as a divine seeking after man and woman. God loves us and he wants to be with us in restored communication, according to his original design in full integrity. Jesus Christ could announce it as the Kingdom of God. A new realm of unbroken communication.

God' way of restoring us to his Kingdom is by entering into concrete human existence in Christ, in whom all things will be gathered. He is, therefore, the Saviour, the one who restores that which was broken and ex-communicated. He is the King and in relationship to him our wholeness rests.

In Jesus Christ, the decisive and only authentic Word of God comes to man and woman. In him the image of God becomes gloriously visible. In him all things are reconciled to God. He overcomes the broken relationship, reopening the way of authentic communication. In him it is

possible to be one in the full sense of the word, in spite of all differences and divisions which separate us and hamper or frustrate communication. In the truest sense, Jesus Christ is the only ground on which full and true "communication between" can become effective. In and through him there grows a body, a new community, which stands in the world with a new hope.

But now we have reached an important point. In Jesus Christ, who changes in principle the total human situation, because in him the new realm of faith, hope and love as a divine gift enters the corrupt body of humankind, the two patterns of communication - "communication of" and "communication between" are connected. Telling the Christian message, is the heralding of Jesus Christ as the reconciler and the reintegrator of the broken pattern of human life. Biblical history uncovers the cause of broken human communication and presents Christ in whose life, death and resurrection we discover the way back to its real meaning.

In the whole range of forms in which "communication between" human persons takes place, there is, of course, also a lot of "communication of" implied: communication of ideas, doctrines, emotions, instruction, values, information, appeal, and so forth. And there is the whole range of partial or full responses, including indifference and defiance. Here the question arises: Is communication of the Christian message one kind of the many forms of inter-human discourse or is it a category of its own? In Biblical light, it has a dimension to it which makes it unique. Of course, the Gospel message is transmitted in the same way as any other message. But it comes out of the prophetic consciousness that it is the Word of the Lord of the universe: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken." (Isa 1:2) We must make it known. It is not a private message. It has called a community into being, the Church, which exists for the sake of the world, for the sake of mission, and not for its own sake. The communication of this message of healing to the world is the thing for which the Church exists: "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations" (Ps. 67:2). It is a constraining task and an unending one. Communication of the message is the supreme category of which all activities of the Church are a part.

There is no part of life or of the world which is ever definitely evangelized.

This unceasing communication of the Christian message is what we call the apostolic or missionary obligation of the Church. What Paul says in II Cor. 5:14 and 1 Cor. 9:16 about himself is valid for the Church as a whole. "The love of Christ constrains us". It is the love of Christ, not our love for Christ. When Jesus Christ meets his disciples after his resurrection he makes them into his apostles by saying, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Our God is a missionary God and his Church is a missionary church. "For God so loved the world..." We are constrained to make this message known.

The Christian message makes known the revelation of God, not simply an idea of God which enters into competition with human ideas about the realm of the divine. Revelation is God's initiative in disclosing himself. He wants to be known. God shows himself in his acts in history and his inter-action with his people by his spoken word of command, promise and of judgment. He opens his heart and makes known the "mystery" of his saving will to us. In the New Testament the proclamation always has the character of the announcement of God's acts, which were done for us, and of the invitation to enter into the stream of this divine saving history.

The Christian message is not communicated in the realm of our experience alone because experience is not the basic factor. What is basic is that God's acts have established a new redemptive reality. At Pentecost the crowds heard the apostles proclaim "the wonderful works of God", and not their own undeniably marvelous experiences of their Master. This does not mean that experiential witness has no value. The Old Testament prophets are great objectivists and great subjectivists. But they do not "have" the message as much as the message "has" them. The Apostle John in the opening of his first letter expresses in a marvelous way this unity of subjectivity and objectivity. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; -- that

which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ."

God wants to be known in his being, his will and his purpose. The entire Biblical record makes that abundantly clear. His covenant with Israel. His appointed prophets. The incarnation , life, death and resurrection of his only Son. This yearning finds its expression in the Church, which is his body on earth. The head of the church is Christ. The apostolic mandate issues from him.

One other point should be made. Throughout the Bible it is consistently maintained that the primary author of the effective transmission of the Gospel message is the Holy Spirit. It is not simply communication between two human partners. There is an invisible third partner, the Holy Spirit. He is the chief one. The fundamental aim is conversion. The Greek word is "metanoia" - a turning and re-orientation. That is a step beyond persuasion. "Repent, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

While the message is imperative, it is, at the same time, a scandal to all self-confident human wisdom. Human nature resists it, although it is the only power capable of transforming the individual into his or her true, created nature. The very best methods of communication do not guarantee this life-transforming result.

There is in the Bible the concept of the hardening of hearts. It is seen both from God's side and from the human side. It is mentioned in a number of passages. There is the mention of Pharoah in Exodus, of Psalm 95 and Hebrews, chapters 3 and 4. This is very pertinent to the treatment of communication in Biblical light. The examples mentioned are pointed cases of communication, both between God and his human children and between members of the human family, themselves. Jesus said that God can harden human hearts through the purposeful use of parables. The irony is that we usually consider these parables to be models of adaptive communication. Look, for example, at Matt. 13: 11-15. As so often, Jesus

appeals to the Old Testament, Isaiah, chapter 6, where in a strangely striking way Isaiah, after the vision of God's glory and offering himself to God in order to be "sent", received as God's message to convey to the people the following one: "Hear indeed, but understand not; and see indeed, but perceive not" (Isa. 6:9). This cardiosclerosis (heardening of heart), also called "fattening of the heart" is, according to the Bible an act of God, and it happens. It is the frustration of communication within the act of communication. This act of divine judgment points to the "mystery of iniquity" in the world, the realm of demonic power to which a human being can deliver himself and become inaccessible to the source of the transforming Word. So we see that the communication of the Word of God is not cast in human form alone. It has also strong theological foundations.

To think and live with the Bible in such a way that one's fundamental thinking is inspired and governed by its view of reality implies being fully conscious of its dominant purposeful motive. This life cannot be adequately understood solely by means of human constructs of philosophy, mythology, psychology, sociology, anthropology or whatever. The Biblical affirmation is that we are in a genuine bondage to the elemental spirits of the universe (Gal. 4:3) and under "principalities and powers and spiritual hosts of wickedness (Eph. 6:12), (Rom. 8:28), (Col. 2:15). These are not included in the calculations of modern scientific method. They have their place in the transcendant world, not in the closed constructs of the modern mind.

Real, though these powers are, the Bible says they have been ultimately disarmed. There is a power greater than evil. And he is the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In this Biblical perspective we get some idea of the dynamic implications of the Lordship of Christ, the great liberator, and of what "Christian liberty" can mean. It is true that the very same God who hardens hearts sometimes is God our Saviour. And he wills that all shall be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Jesus Christ, who spoke in parables "because seeing they do not see; and hearing

they do not hear, nor do they understand" (Matt. 13:13), is the same Lord who came to seek and to save sinners. But he will not violate our freedom and our dignity. God is love. And love is kind. So kind that he will even allow us to continue to live in darkness, self-orientation and isolation if we resist his loving initiative.